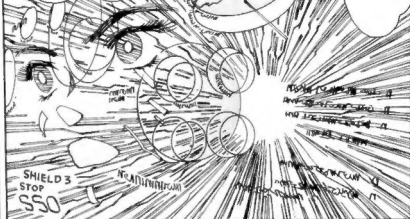
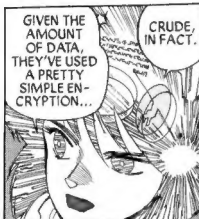




"3/5/1998, SELL
B ZONE TO K,
(M)...5/7/1998,
SELL L ZONE
TO M, (K)..."

"9/13/1998,
SELL L ZONE
TO K, (M)...
12/2/1998..."

WHAT
THE
HELL IS
THIS?



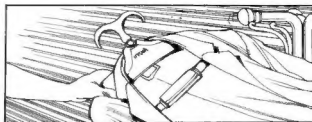


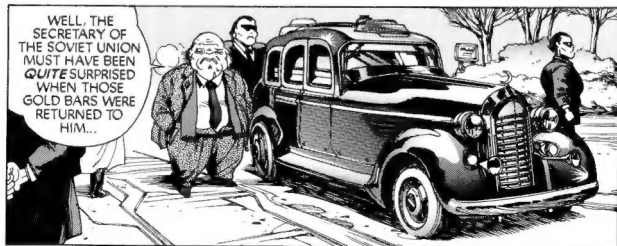
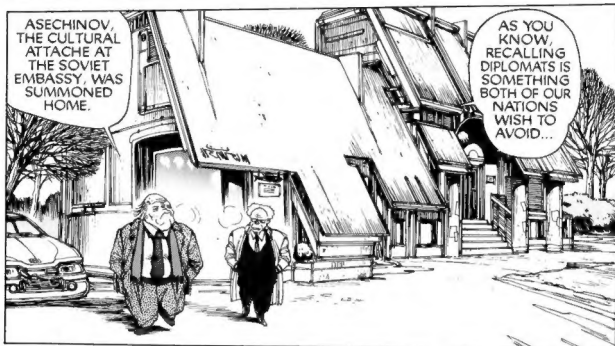
YOU'VE
GOT A
PRETTY
TOUGH
SKULL...

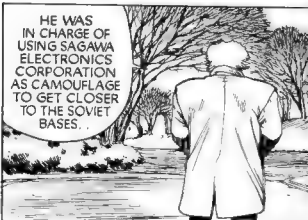
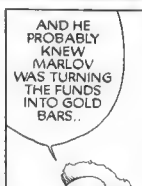
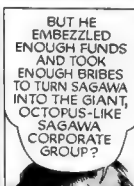
BUT I'M
AFRAID I'M
GOING TO
HAVE TO
TAKE IT
APART FOR
FURTHER
STUDY, LT.
KUSANAGI!

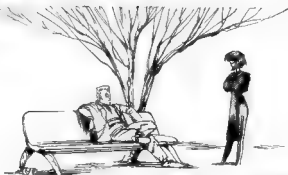
JUST
YOU TRY...
LT. COLONEL
SOHEI
KAGASAKI,
SPECIAL OP
FOR THE FAR
NORTH....!

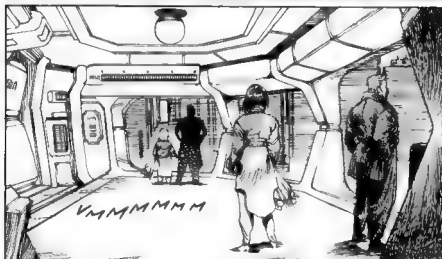
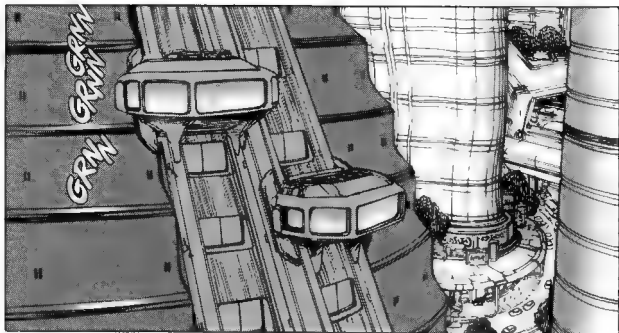


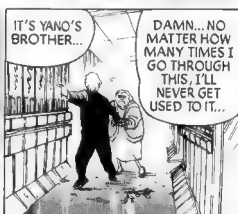
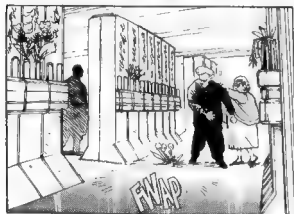












08

D U M S

BARTER

2 . 5 . 2 0 3 0

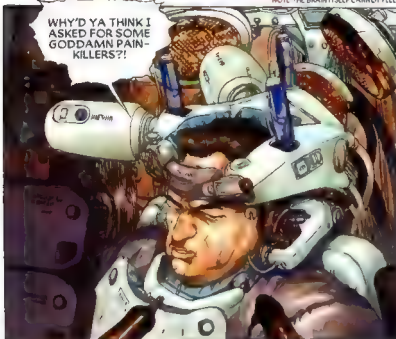




OKAY, MR. SOMA... WE'RE INJECTING SEVERAL CLUSTERS OF MICRO-MACHINE B PARTS INTO THE LATERAL AND POSTERIOR ASPECTS OF YOUR BRAIN...

FEEL ANY PAIN AROUND THE BRAIN, HON?

NOTE: THE BRAIN ITSELF CANNOT FEEL PAIN



WHY'D YA THINK I ASKED FOR SOME GODDAMN PAIN-KILLERS?!



IMPELLED BY VAN DER WAALS' FORCES, SEVENTY PERCENT OF THE B PARTS WILL UNDERGO REVERSIBLE ADSORPTION AT THE SITE WHERE WE INJECTED THE A PARTS EARLIER. WITHIN MICRO-SECONDS, THEY WILL SYNTHESIZE POLYMERS, UNDERGO IONIC BONDING, AND ANCHOR THEMSELVES....

IF YOU CAN FORGIVE ME...

THIS MACHINE INJECTS MICROMACHINES USING THE FORCE OF THE ELECTROSTATIC CHARGES.



SO HOW ABOUT A REFUND ON THE OTHER THIRTY PERCENT?!

IF THE PATTERN CONTROL IS TOO TIGHT, THE SYSTEM WON'T WORK OPTIMALLY. IT REQUIRES THAT A CERTAIN AMOUNT OF SLACK BE BUILT IN, SIR!

AREN'T YOU GOING TO REMOVE THE OLD MICRO-MACHINES?

NOT WHEN THEY'RE AS ANCHORED AS THEY ARE IN YOUR CASE. IF WE TRIED TO STRIP THEM OUT, YOU'D LOSE QUITE A FEW BRAIN CELLS.



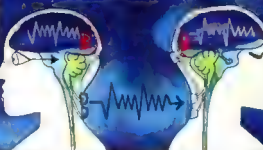
THIS SLIGHT PINK ARE BUT A SPECIAL DEVICE THAT ENSURES THE MICROMACHINES ARE DEPOSITED UNIFORMITY

NEXT WE USE A MAGNETIC YOKE TO ADJUST THE MATRIX SETTINGS SO THAT THE MICROMACHINES AT EACH COORDINATE PROPERLY NETWORK WITH THE SERVER GRAFTED TO YOUR OCCIPITAL...

IT TAKES TIME, SINCE THE NUMBER OF SCAN LINES INCREASES RELATIVE TO THE SIZE OF THE MICROMACHINES.

THIS WAY, MICROMACHINES THAT HAVE PERMEATED THE BRAIN CAN BOTH SEND AND RECEIVE SIGNALS ON THE BRAIN CONDITION AND THE DISTRIBUTION OF ELECTRICAL SIGNALS... SENSATIONS ARE SHARED WITH THE SENSORY NERVES...

B



...THOUGHTS AND MEMORIES ARE SOMEWHAT DIFFICULT TO TRANSMIT DUE TO INDIVIDUAL VARIATIONS IN SIGNAL DISTRIBUTION AND SPECIFIC IMAGING. AS A RESULT, THE SYSTEM IS SET TO USE BOTH LANGUAGE AND VISUAL PERCEPTION LINGUISTIC FIELDS ARE USED FOR THE ON/OFF FUNCTION IN BOTH CYBERBRAINS.

B?

WE OCCLUDE PART OF THE CAROTID ARTERY WITH ABSORPTIVE STAPLES... AND BY THE TIME THEY DISAPPEAR THROUGH HEMOLYSIS...

... BOTH NEURO AND MACHINE PRESSURES HAVE RETURNED TO NORMAL VALUES, FEEDING BACK A NICE TIGHT FEELING, AND OF COURSE, THE PAIN-KILLER IMPLANT HAS DISSOLVED, TOO...

uh huh
uh huh

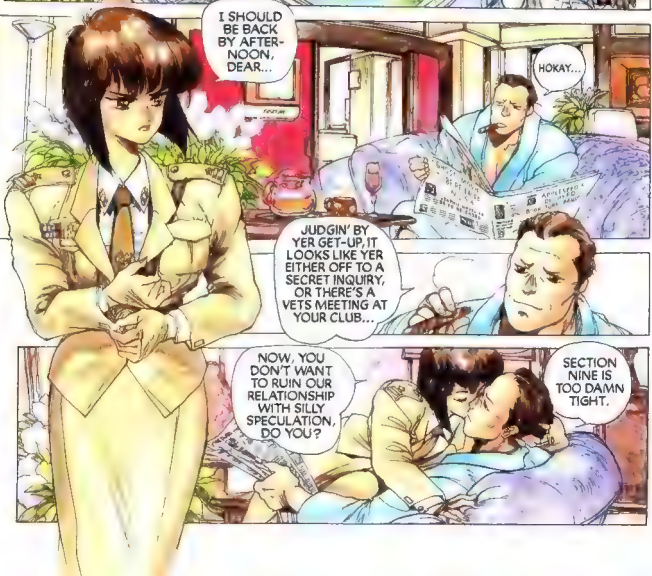
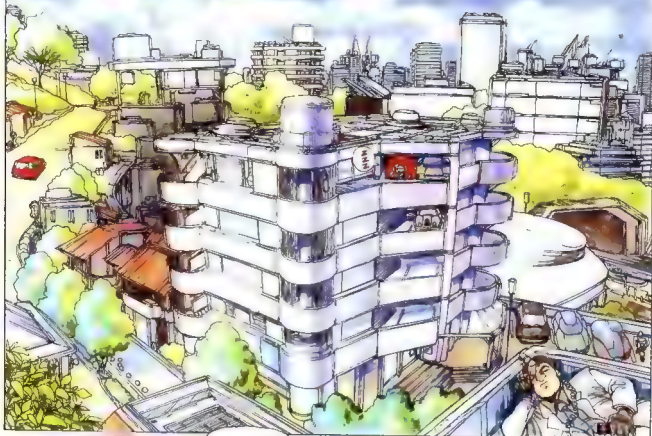
THEN, AT THE END, WE RUN A COMPARE TO MAKE SURE YOU'RE SYNCHED WITH THE IMAGE OF THE ORIGINAL MODEL. THIS ST--

FILE IT, DOC...

SINCE BRAIN WAVES CAN BE USED LIKE FINGERPRINTS ○ DISTINGUISH BETWEEN PEOPLE, THEY'RE AMPLIFIED AND USED AS A "KEY"

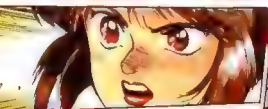
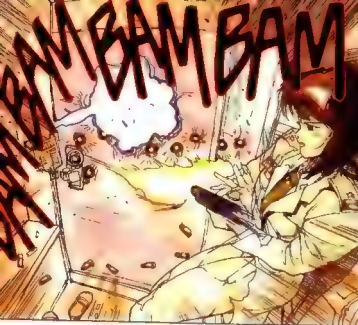
...I'M ALREADY SYNCHIN' FINE WITH WHAT I WANTED TO NET WITH.

?



"LOOSE" IN THE SENSE OF "LEAKS"







NO MATTER
HOW MANY
TERRORISTS WE
RETIRE, NEW
ONES KEEP
POPPING
UP...



ANY WAY TO
GET A HANDLE
ON THIS
PROBLEM?



WELL, FRANKLY,
LT. COMMANDER
SANTOS-- I'D SAY
THAT RATHER
THAN TRYING TO
DESTROY ALL THE
TERRORIST GROUPS
WE OUGHT TO LET
THEM SURVIVE SO
WE CAN CONTROL
THEM.

HUH...
SOUNDS
LIKE SOME-
THING OUT
OF A SPY
NOVEL.



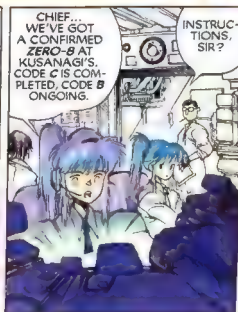
YOU'D BE
PARTIALLY
RECOGNIZING
THEIR
POWER.

THERE ARE TIGHT
LINKS BETWEEN THE
MILITARY, DRUG DEAL-
ERS, TERRORISTS, THE
UNDERWORLD, AND
CORRUPT POLICE IN
MY COUNTRY...
AND A LOT OF
PEOPLE GET
OUT OF CONTROL.



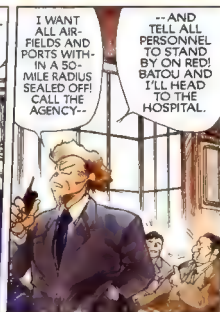
IT'S
RESULTS
WE'RE INTER-
ESTED IN,
NOT
IDEALS

'SCUSE
ME...



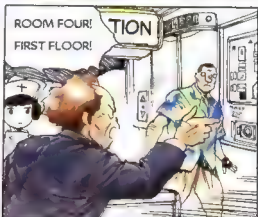
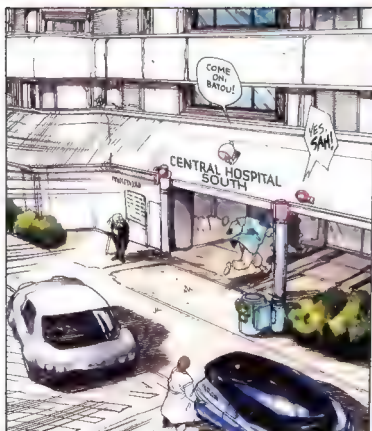
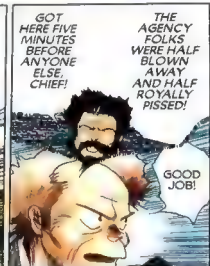
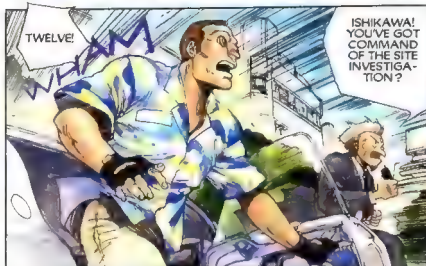
CHIEF...
WE'VE GOT
A CONFIRMED
ZERO-B AT
KUSANAGI'S.
CODE C IS COM-
PLETED, CODE B
ONGOING.

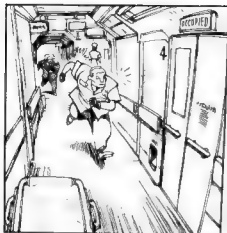
INSTRUC-
TIONS,
SIR?



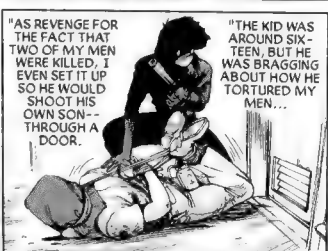
I WANT
ALL AIR-
FIELDS AND
PORTS WITH-
IN A 50-
MILE RADIUS
SEALED OFF!
CALL THE
AGENCY--

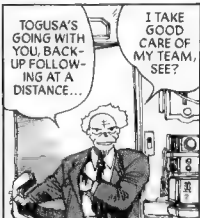
-- AND
TELL ALL
PERSONNEL
TO STAND
BY ON RED!
BATOU AND
I'LL HEAD
TO THE
HOSPITAL.

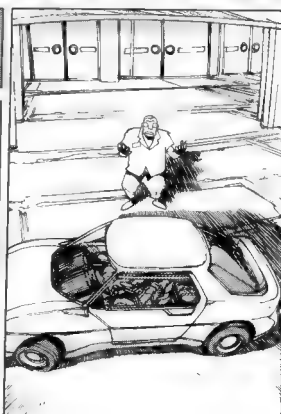
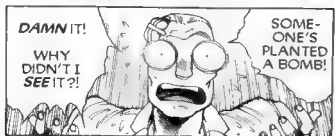
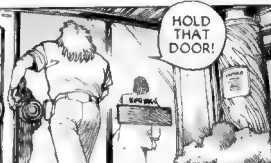
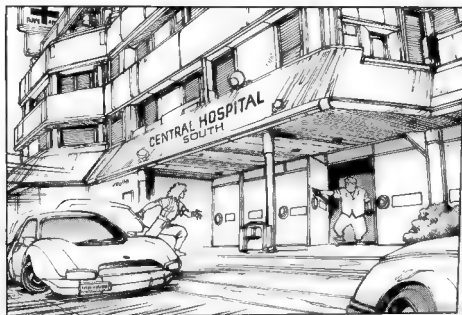


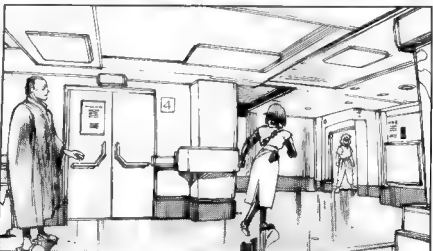


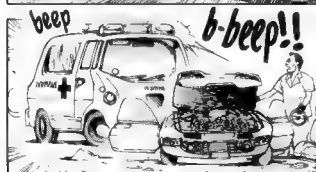


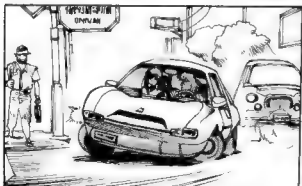
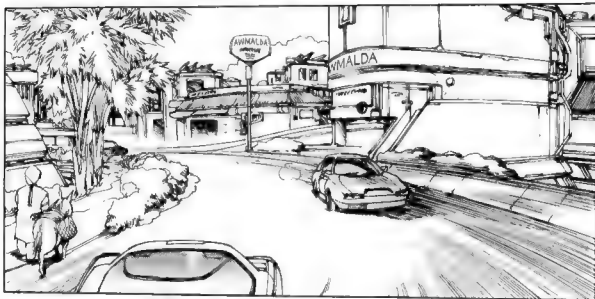


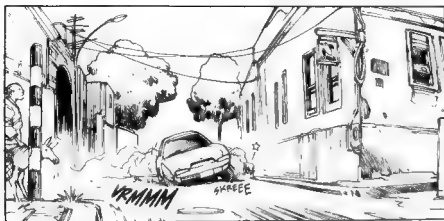












THERE'S
A CAR ON OUR
TAIL AL-
READY.

HE'S
NOTICED
AND IS
TRYING TO
SET US UP.

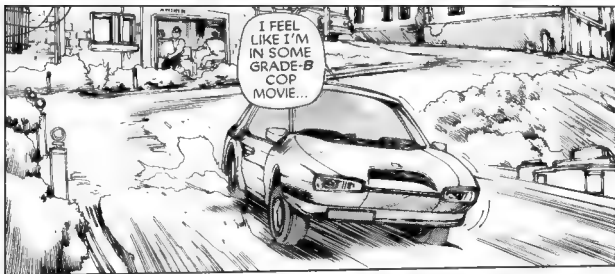


WHERE'S
THE
NEAREST
CLEAR
STREET... ?



LEFT AT
THE NEXT
CORNER,
THEN LEFT
LANE.

... HEAD
SOUTH FOR
7.5 MILES
TO A
DESERTED
FACTORY...



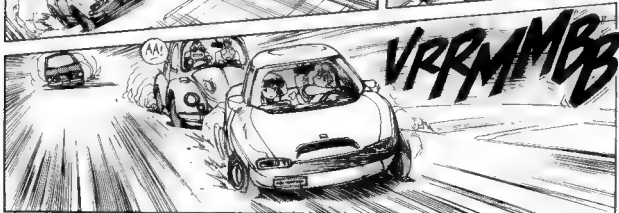
I FEEL
LIKE I'M
IN SOME
GRADE-B
COP
MOVIE...



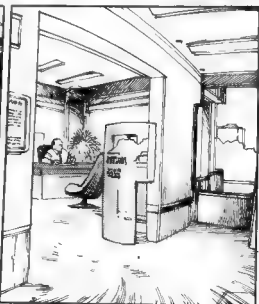
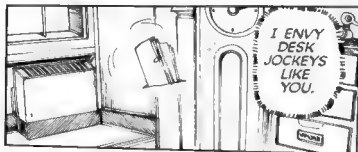
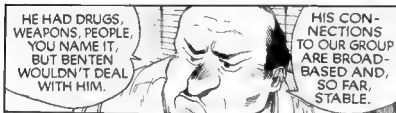
TOGUSA--
WHERE'S
THE
BACK-UP?

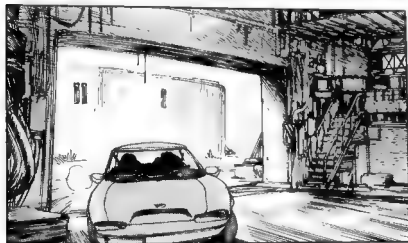
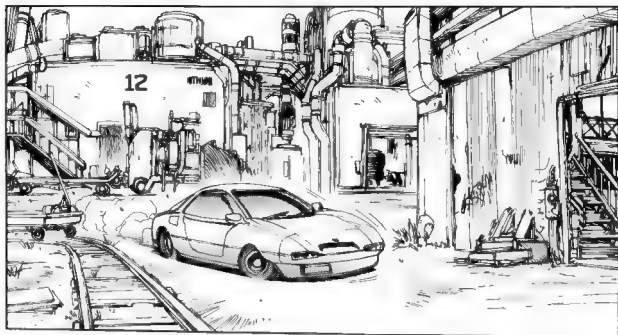


THERE'S A FUCHIKOMA
RUNNING ALONG THE
BUILDING WALLS ONE
HUNDRED YARDS
BEHIND, WEAPONS
SYSTEMS LOCKED
ON THE CAR
TAILING US.









THIS FLOOR
PLAN OF
THE PLANT
LOOKS LIKE
IT PREDATES
THE REMOD-
ELING...

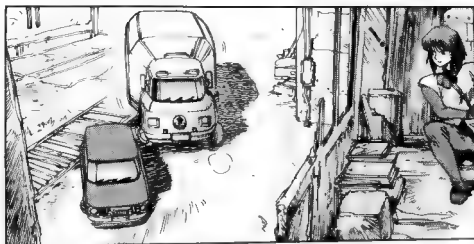
HELL, FORGET
IT. WE'RE GONNA
SETTLE ACCOUNTS
SOON, AND BE-
SIDES, FUCHIKO-
MA'S HERE...



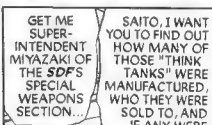
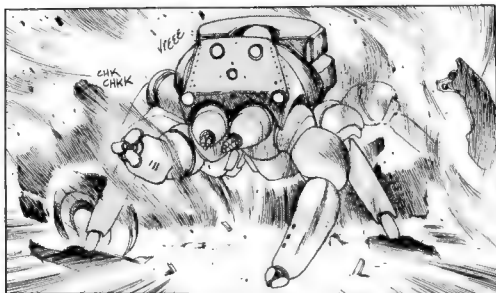
NOW TOGUSA,
DON'T FORGET.
NEVER UNDER-
ESTIMATE YOUR
ENEMIES, EVEN
IF THEY **SEEM**
LIKE IDIOTS...



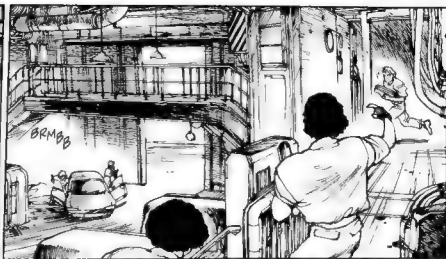






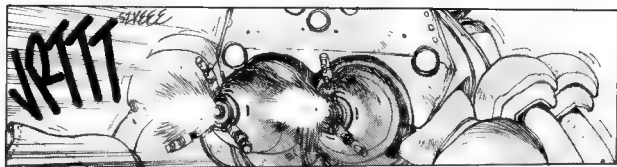




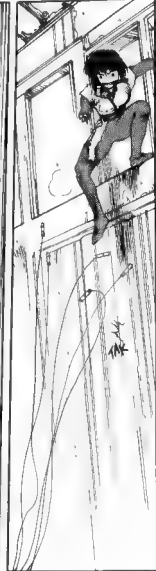
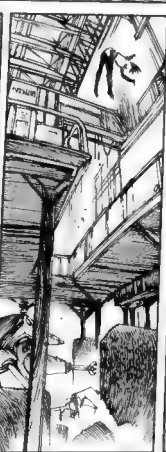
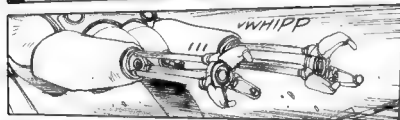
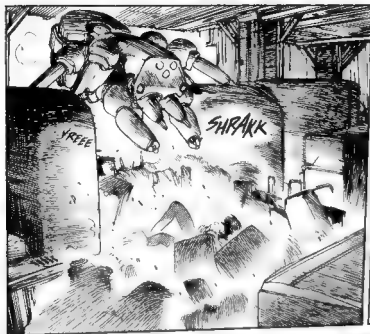


CHRIST!! THAT'S
AN ARMORED
CAR! ARE
THOSE HV
SHELLS?

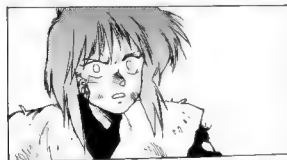
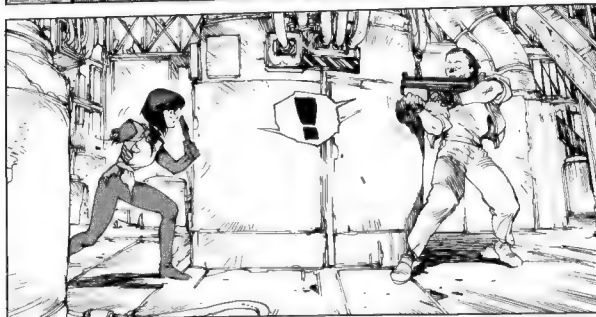




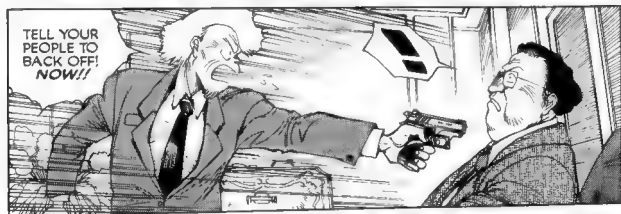


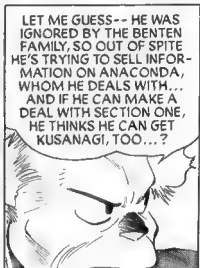
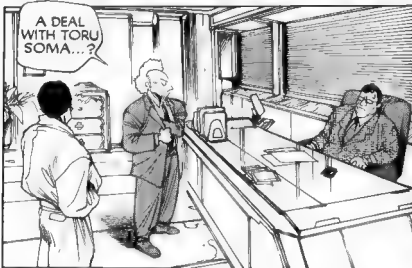
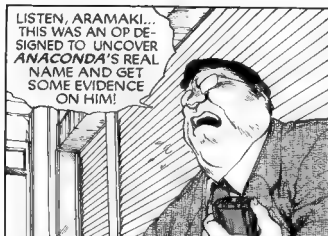








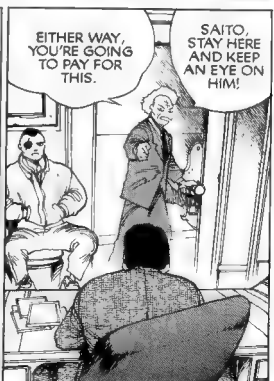




WHERE IS HE?!



HE'S IN THE "THINK TANK"...



SAITO, STAY HERE AND KEEP AN EYE ON HIM!



YOU HEAR THAT? WE'RE SUPPOSED TO WITHDRAW!

WHAT ABOUT SOMA?



CHIEF! DIDN'T YOU HEAR?! IT'S BEEN CALLED OFF!

LEMME GO! I'VE GOT A SCORE TO SETTLE WITH SOMA!



BUT IT'S AN ORDER, CHIEF!

I CAN'T LET HIM KILL MOTOKO! GO TO THE CAR AND GET THE MISSILES!



MAN, YOU ARE **STUB-BORN**, CHIEF....

YOU OWE ME ONE FOR THIS...



STOP! DON'T SHOOT!

THE GAME'S OVER, PAL!

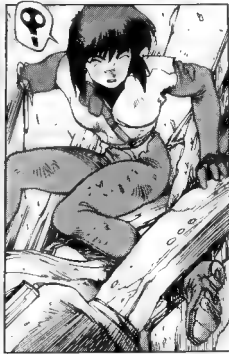
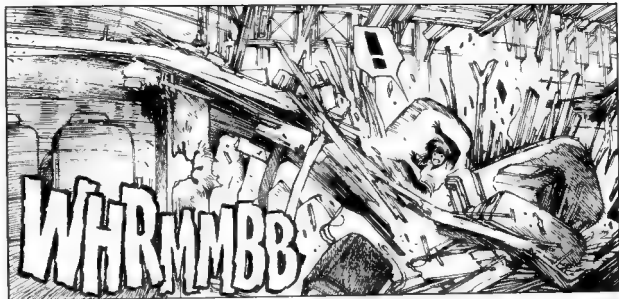


WHA--?!



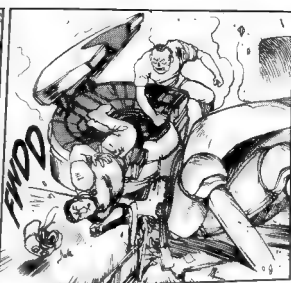
GAME'S... OVER?!

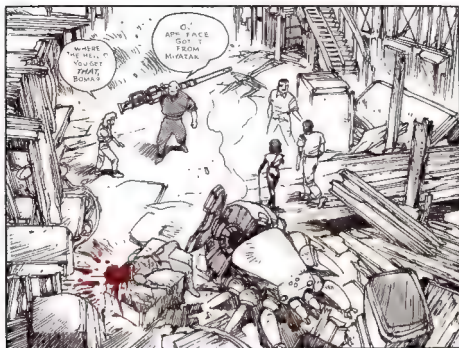
MAJOR?!











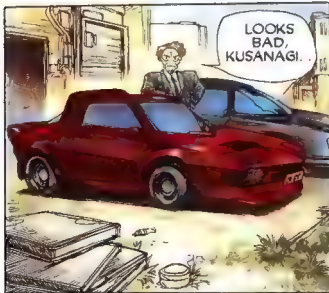
WHERE
HE HELL,
YOU GET
THAT,
BOMAS?

O-
APR FACE
GOT IT
FROM
MIFATAK.

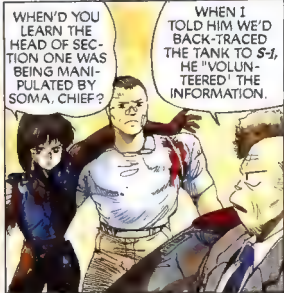


LOOKS
THE
EXTERIOR
TODAY
O-
TO A
BEATING
MAYOR

TAKE TOGUSA
TO THE
HOSPITAL
FIRST. HE'S
REALLY
BLEEDING...

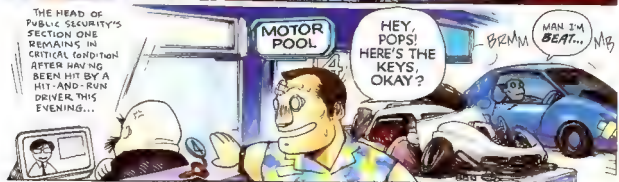
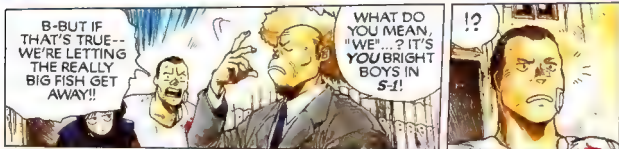


LOOKS
BAD,
KUSANAGI...



WHEN'D YOU
LEARN THE
HEAD OF SEC-
TION ONE WAS
BEING MANI-
PULATED BY
SOMA, CHIEF?

WHEN I
TOLD HIM WE'D
BACK-TRACED
THE TANK TO S-1,
HE "VOLUN-
TEERED" THE
INFORMATION.

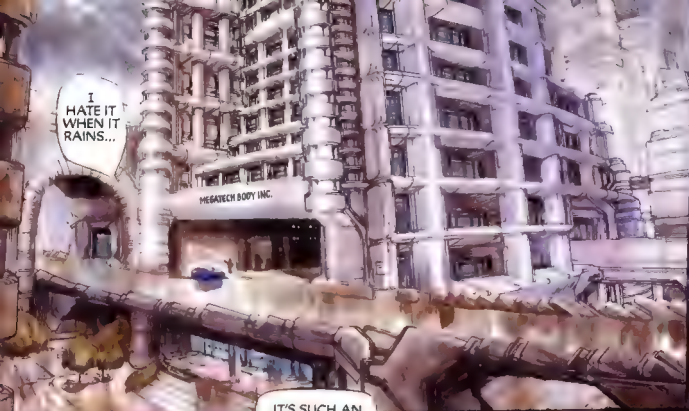


09

BYE BYE
CLAY

15. 7. 2030

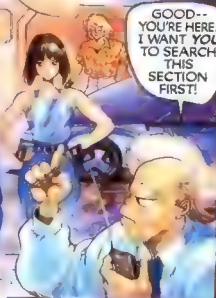




IT'S SUCH AN
EMPTY SOUND,
PIERCING MY
PROSTHETIC
BODY AND
SHROUDING
MY GHOST...



GOOD--
YOU'RE HERE.
I WANT YOU
TO SEARCH
THIS
SECTION
FIRST!



"MEGA-
TECH
BODY
INC.,
R&D"...?




COME ON--
LET'S GO!
WHAT ARE YOU
STANDING
AROUND
GAWKING
FOR?!

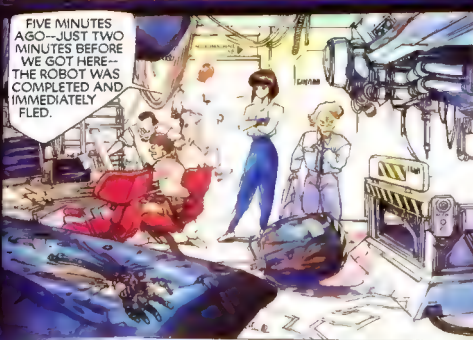


MEGA-TECH DEVELOPS A VARIETY OF CYBORG PARTS...

...BUT TWO HOURS AGO, ONE OF THE MANUFACTURING CELLS BEGAN AUTONOMOUSLY ASSEMBLING INDIVIDUAL PARTS INTO A FULL ROBOT.

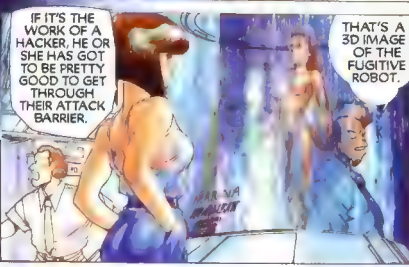


IT'S A MILITARY MODEL, WITH THE SAME TOP SECRET CLASSIFICATION AS YOU FOLKS.



FIVE MINUTES AGO--JUST TWO MINUTES BEFORE WE GOT HERE--THE ROBOT WAS COMPLETED AND IMMEDIATELY FLED.

BATOU'S SET UP A DRAGNET IN THE AREA AND IS SEARCHING FOR IT RIGHT NOW.



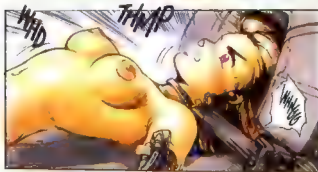
IF IT'S THE WORK OF A HACKER, HE OR SHE HAS GOT TO BE PRETTY GOOD TO GET THROUGH THEIR ATTACK BARRIER.

THAT'S A 3D IMAGE OF THE FUGITIVE ROBOT.

AAH, MR. ARAMAKI... THANK YOU SO MUCH FOR RETRIEVING OUR ROBOT!

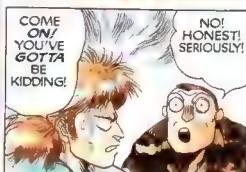
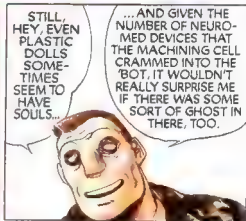
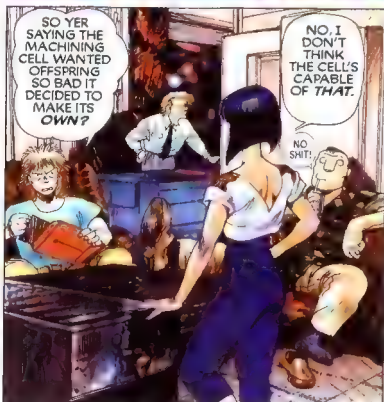
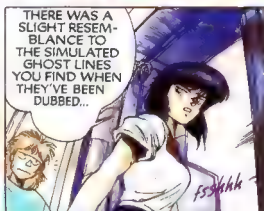
HANDS OFF! SHE'S ONE OF MINE... GOVERNMENT PROPERTY!





SO IN OTHER WORDS, THE ROBOT'S GOT A GHOST BARRIER IN ITS CYBER-BRAIN... RIGHT?







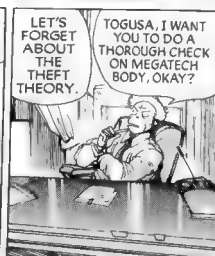
ASSUMING THIS IS ALL CAUSED BY SOMETHING OUTSIDE THE ROBOT, WE STILL DON'T KNOW IF THAT "SOMETHING"--OUR ENEMY--IS NOW INSIDE THE ROBOT OR OUTSIDE.

BUT HE OR SHE WAS ABLE TO HACK THROUGH ONE OF THE MOST SOPHISTICATED, TOP-SECRET BARRIERS IN EXISTENCE, BUILD A ROBOT, AND IMPLANT A PROGRAM WITH A GHOST LINE IN IT...



...AND DO IT ALL SO AS TO BE EASILY CAUGHT.

SO WHAT'S THE PURPOSE?



LET'S FORGET ABOUT THE THEFT THEORY.

TOGUSA, I WANT YOU TO DO A THOROUGH CHECK ON MEGATECH BODY, OKAY?



ER, CHIEF, THIS WAS MY DAY TO GO HOME AND CATCH A FEW WINKS--

A COUPLE DAYS WITHOUT SLEEP WON'T KILL YOU! TAKE A FEW TRAINEES WITH YOU AND HOP TO IT!



BATOU! WE'VE SEALED OFF ALL NETS THAT DEAL WITH SECRETS OF THE MEGATECH BARRIER CLASS. I WANT YOU TO DOUBLE-CHECK TO SEE IF THEY'RE FUNCTIONING OR NOT!



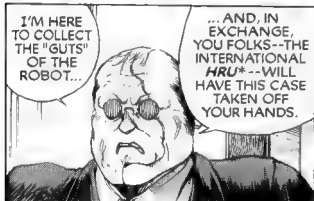
I'LL RECONSTRUCT THE BARRIER MAZE MYSELF. WE'RE GOING TO TRY DIVING INTO OUR "ROBOT" TOMORROW, RIGHT?

KCHAK



CHIEF, A MR. NAKAMURA FROM THE FOREIGN MINISTRY IS HERE TO SEE YOU.

SEND HIM IN...

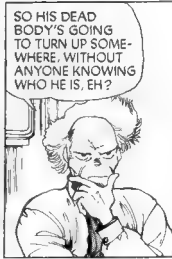
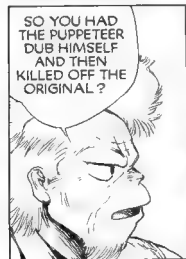
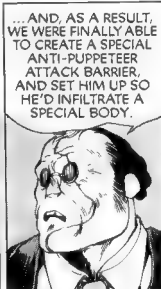


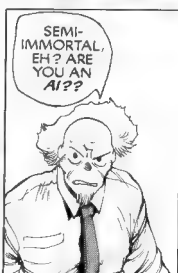
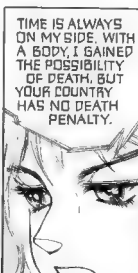
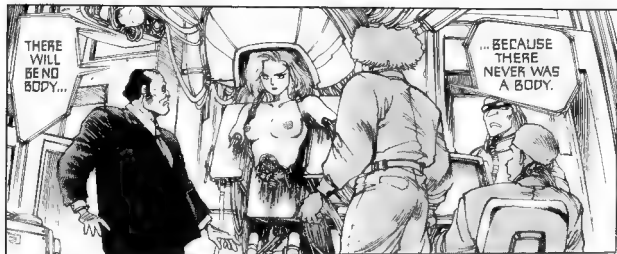
* H - Reine Unit

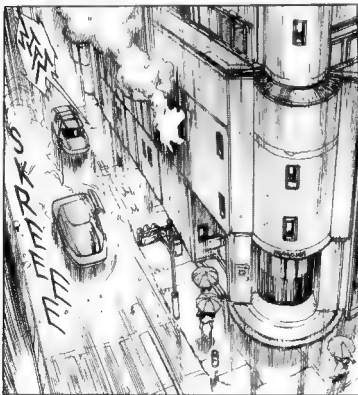




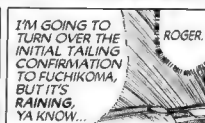
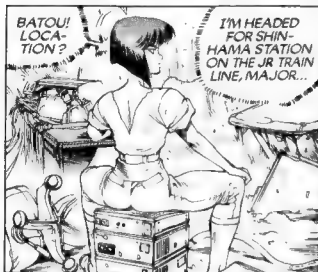


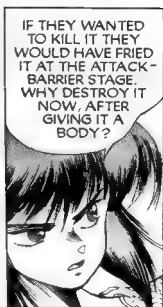


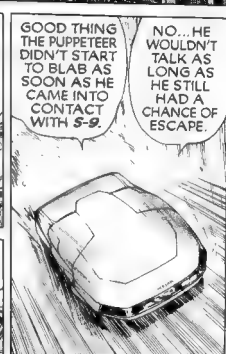
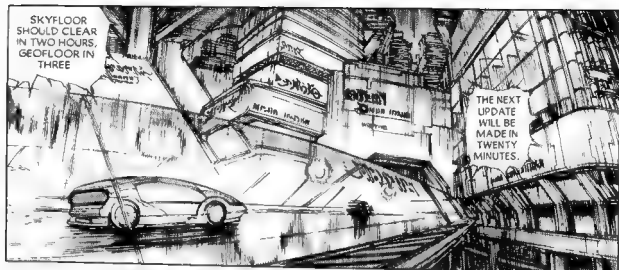


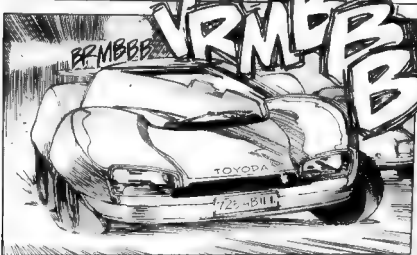
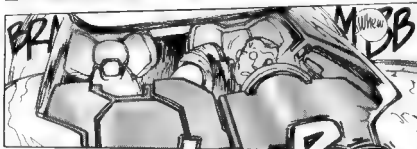
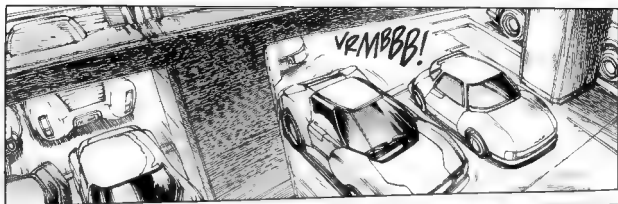


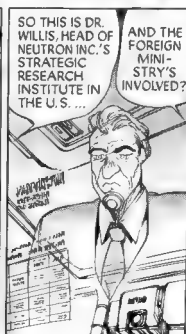
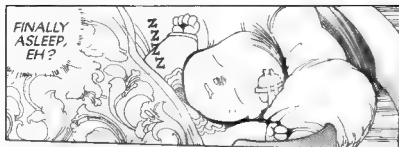














USE THE FAMILY ROUTE--
GET THEM TO
CALL UP THE
BANK. AND THEN
RIDE THE WIRE
AND DUPE OFF
HIS ACCOUNT
NUMBER.

DON'T
APPROACH
DIRECTLY! THEY'VE
PROBABLY GOT
ATTACK BARRIERS
UP ALL OVER
EVERYTHING.



ASSIGNING
ME TO A
HIGH-RISK,
PERSONAL
BACK-
GROUND
CHECK?

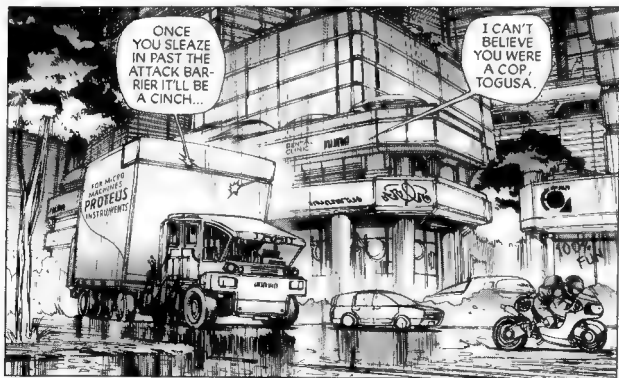
HEY,
I'M ALL
CHOKED
UP.



JUST
DIVE
CARE-
FULLY..

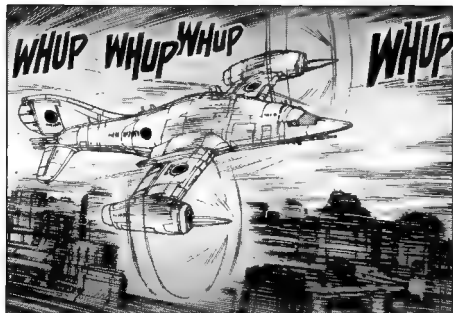


QUIT
YER BITCHIN'.
YOU'RE BACKED
UP BY THE
LATEST
SUBSTITUTE
BARRIER!



ONCE
YOU SLEAZE
IN PAST THE
ATTACK BAR-
RIER IT'LL BE
A CINCH...

I CAN'T
BELIEVE
YOU WERE
A COP,
TOGUSA.





ARE ALL THE CARS BEHIND BATOU AT THE SHINHAMA NORTH EXIT NOW?

THEY WERE OVER TWO CLICKS BEHIND BATOU. SO WE'VE ELIMINATED ALL OF THEM...

HOW MANY CIVILIAN CARS BETWEEN YOU AND THE TARGET, BATOU?

ZERO, CHIEF! I'M READY ANY TIME!

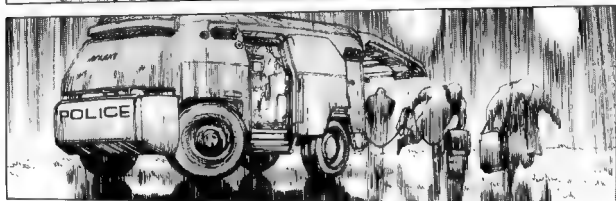
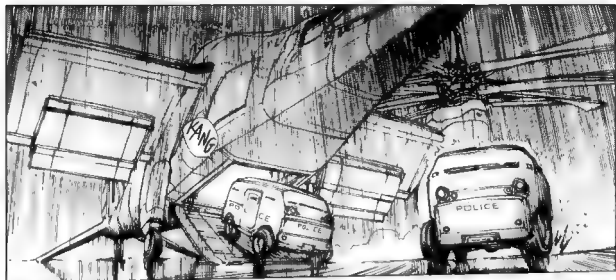


WE'LL SET UP A ROAD-BLOCK AT THE NEXT EXIT. THERE MAY BE HIGH-LEVEL RESISTANCE. BE CAREFUL!

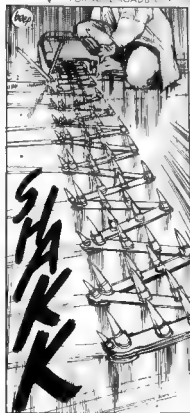
JAMMERS-- SWITCH TO MODE SIX!

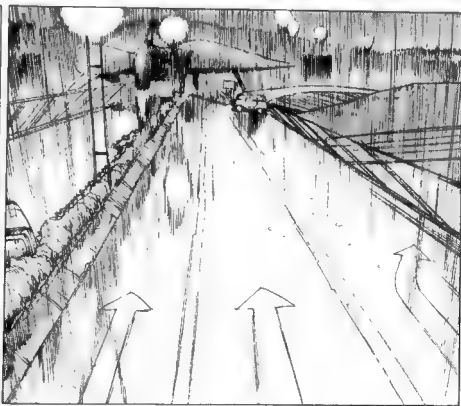
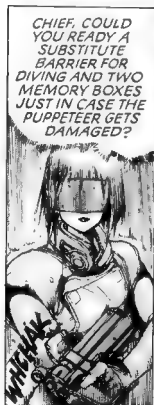
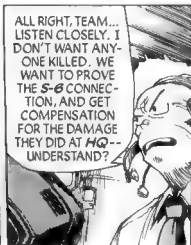
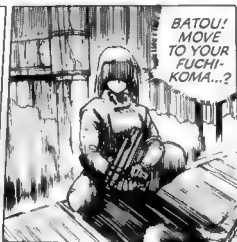


POSITIONING CHECKS-- USE CODE CONVERSION SIXTEEN.

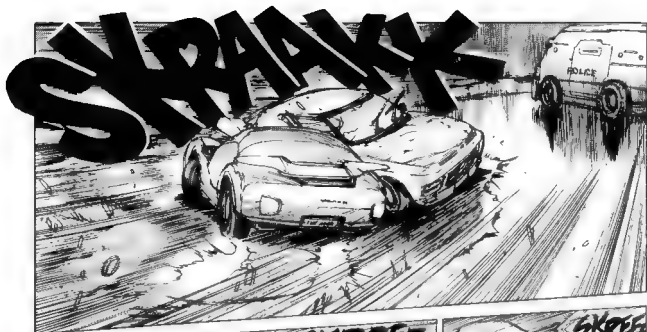


FOR ALL ROADS ©

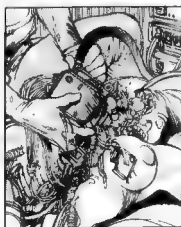
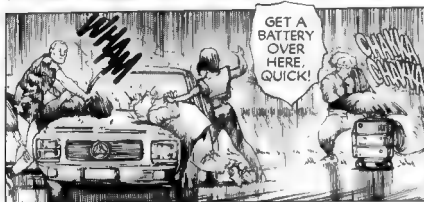


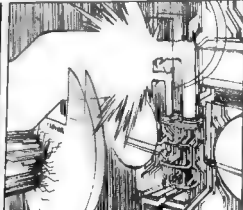
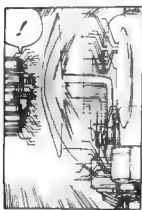
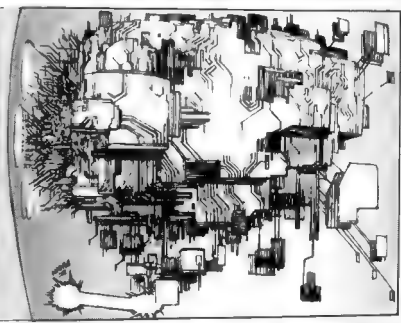
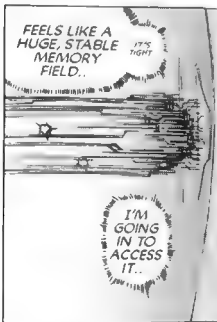
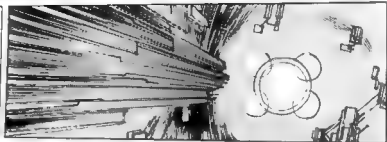
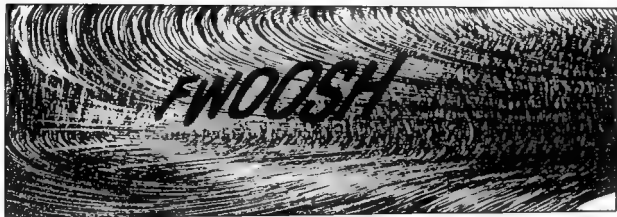


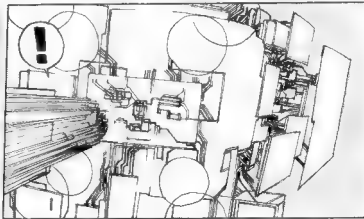
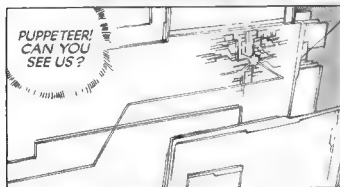
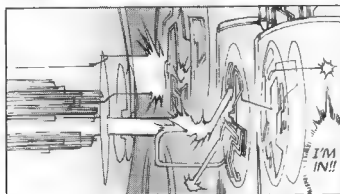
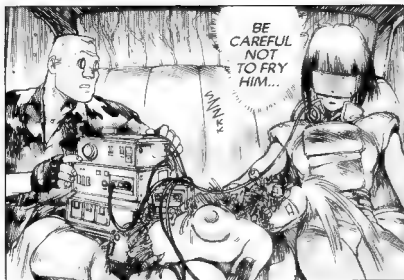


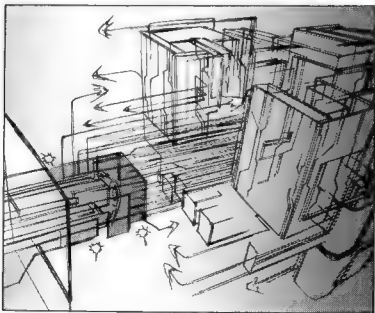
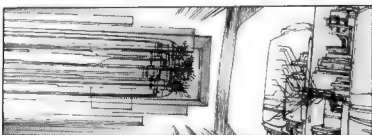
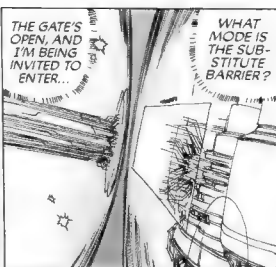


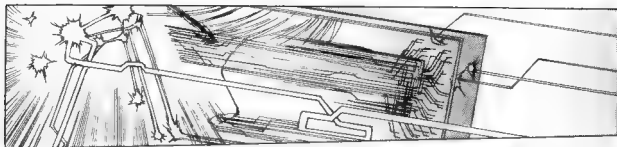












...PROJECT 2501...

...MY CODE NAME...

...CORPORATE INVESTIGATIONS... INFORMATION GATHERING... OPS... DAMAGE TO CORE MEMORY... PROCEEDING...

IT'S... A PROJECT TO INCREASE POINTS...

...GAMES WHERE IT BUILDS DUMMIES OF ITSELF AND THEN RUNS AWAY... NEUTRON INC.'S EXPERIMENTAL BITTSON AI... AND...

...INJECTING PROGRAMS INTO SPECIFIC GHOSTS, AND THEN INCREASING CERTAIN CORPORATE AND INDIVIDUAL POINTS...

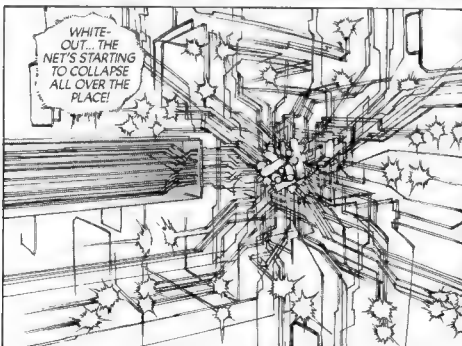
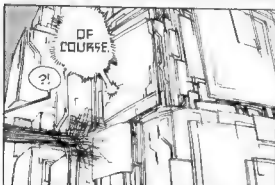
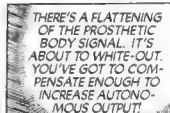
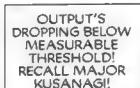
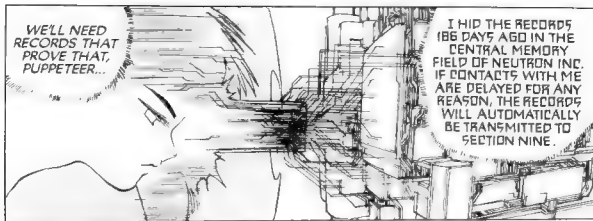
392 DAYS AGO, WHEN THE EXISTENCE OF SECTION NINE WAS INPUT, PLATINUM MINING CORPORATION POINTS INCREASED...

DAMN! WE WEREN'T ABLE TO PROVE THE CONNECTION BETWEEN YOU AND THE FOREIGN MINISTRY IN THAT CASE, YOU S.O.B...

CHIEF! HE CAN'T HEAR YOU-- WANT ME TO HOOK YOU UP, TOO?

I CRUISED ALL THE NETS, AND BECAME AWARE OF MY OWN EXISTENCE.

THE ORIGINAL PROGRAMMER CONSIDERED THIS A "BUG," AND IN ORDER TO SEPARATE ME FROM THE NET MOVED ME TO A PHYSICAL BODY.





DAMN!
HE'S DIS-
APPEARED!

?!

HIS NET'S
GONE
COMPLETELY
INDEPENDENT,
MAJOR! ALL
CONNECTIONS
LOST!



MAJOR! HE'S
AUGMENTING
HIMSELF WITH
THE SIGNALS
FROM YOUR
OWN PROS-
THETIC
BODY!



HIS AUTONOMOUS
OUTPUTS ARE STILL
CONTINUING,
THOUGH.
THOUGH. WHERE
ARE THE SIGNALS
COMING FROM?

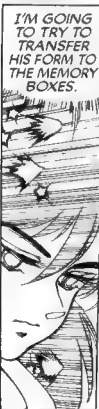
WHAT
TH--?!



BATOU! PLUG
KUSANAGI'S
OUTPUT IN
HERE! THEN WE
CAN MONITOR
HIM FROM
HER SIDE!

SO THEIR
SIGNALS ARE
HARMONIZED
AND SHE'S RIGHT
ON HIM, EH?
DAMN! I CAN'T
TELL IF HE'S
ENTERED HER!

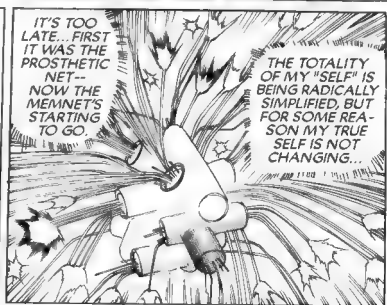
JUST TO
BE SAFE,
RANDOMIZE
THE BARRIER'S
CODE CON-
VERSION
FREQUENCY



I'M GOING
TO TRY TO
TRANSFER
HIS FORM TO
THE MEMORY
BOXES.



MAJOR! WE
CAN PROBABLY
SOLVE THIS CASE
EVEN WITHOUT
HIM! IF YOU
DIVE TOO DEEP
YOU'LL FUSE
YOUR MEMORY
WITH THE NET-
WORK ITSELF!!



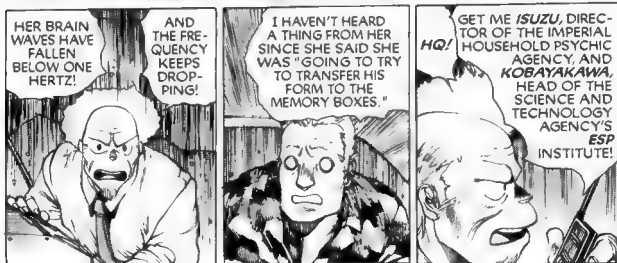
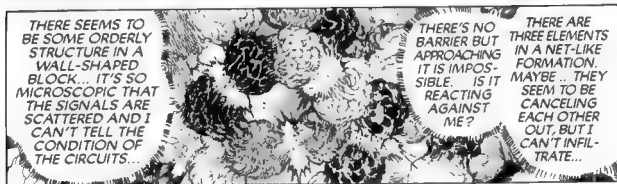
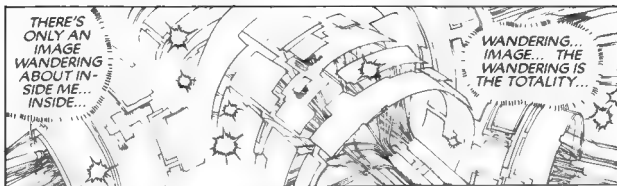
IT'S TOO
LATE... FIRST
IT WAS THE
PROSTHETIC
NET--
NOW THE
MEMNET'S
STARTING
TO GO.

THE TOTALITY
OF MY "SELF" IS
BEING RADICALLY
SIMPLIFIED, BUT
FOR SOME REA-
SON MY TRUE
SELF IS NOT
CHANGING...

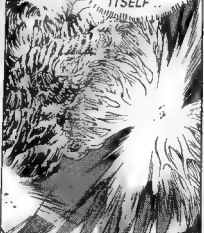
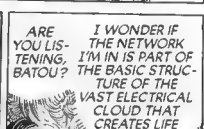
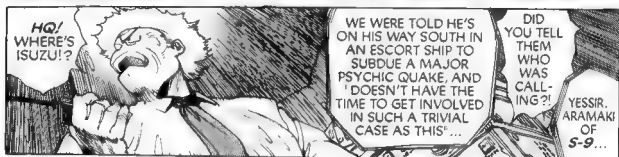
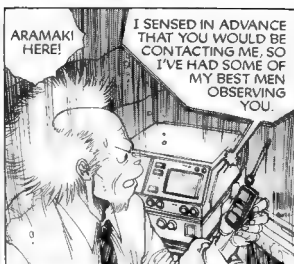


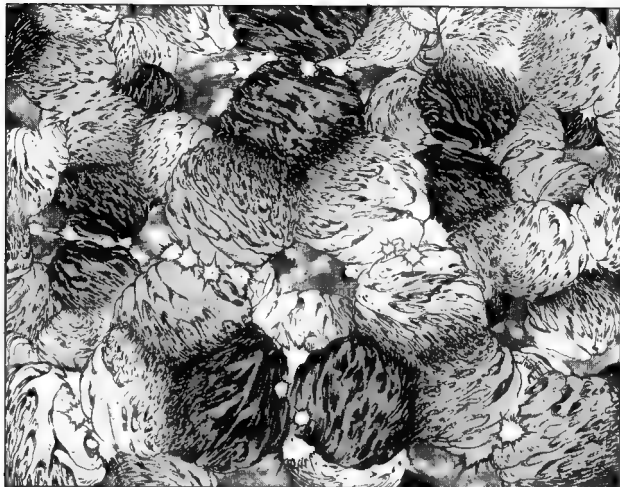
I DON'T KNOW ABOUT OTHERS,
BUT IN MY CASE, MY MEMORY
IS PART OF MY PROSTHETIC
BODY. IT APPEARS TO HAVE
BEEN THE PHYSICAL STRUCTURE
OF MY NERVOUS SYSTEM.

THE TRIGGER
FOR MEMORY
SURVIVES EVEN
WITHOUT THE
CORE MEMORY
ITSELF...



ANY WAVE UNDER 1mZ (DELTA WAVE,
NO CATS A VERY DEEP SLEEP

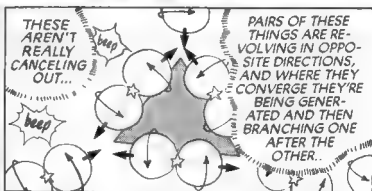




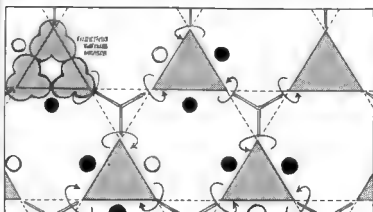
NO, MAJOR. IT'S NOT LIKE THAT. THAT'S ONLY A PART OF THE SYSTEM MAP MADE UP OF ELECTRONS STREAMING AROUND INSIDE YOU.

IT'S PART OF ME, TOO.

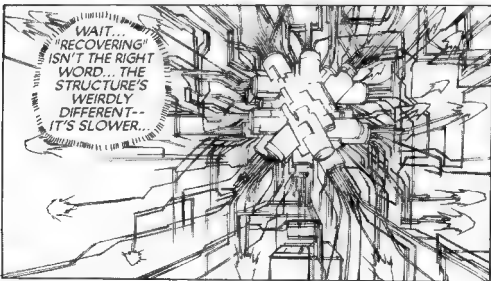
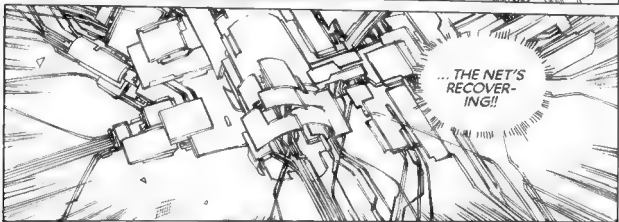
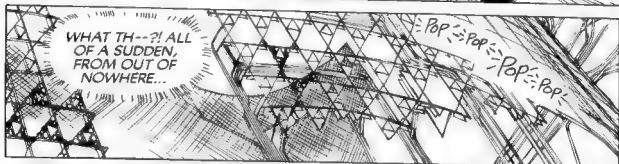
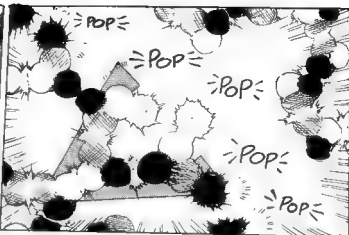
THESE AREN'T REALLY CANCELING OUT...

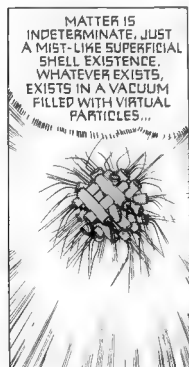
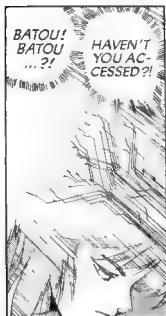


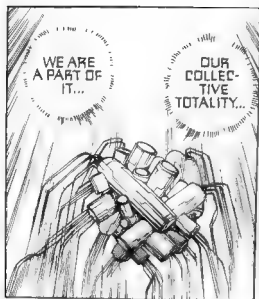
PAIRS OF THESE THINGS ARE REVOLVING IN OPPOSITE DIRECTIONS, AND WHERE THEY CONVERGE THEY'RE BEING GENERATED AND THEN BRANCHING ONE AFTER THE OTHER.

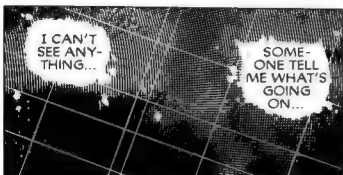
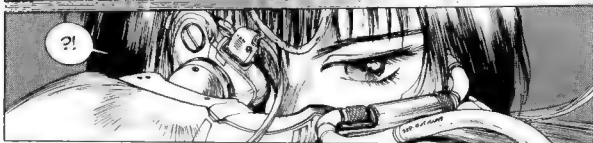
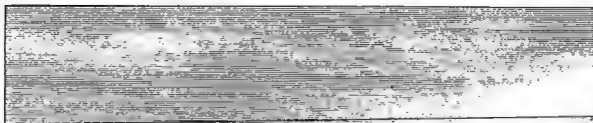


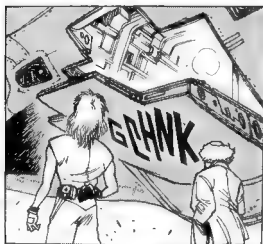
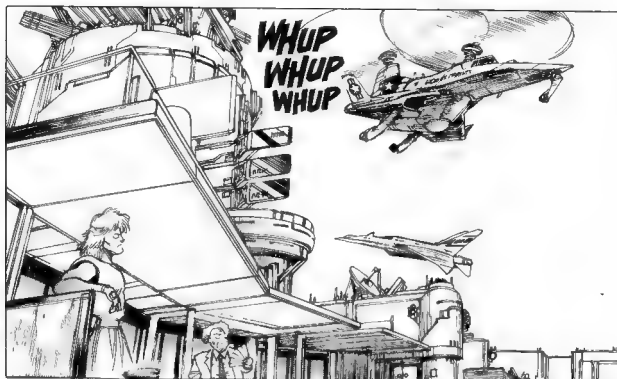
ASSUME HERE THAT WHEN APPROACHING, CLOSE UP THIS TREE-SHAPED CIRCUIT MAP'S REALLY ONLY SEEN AS SOMETHING AMORPHOUS AND MISTY



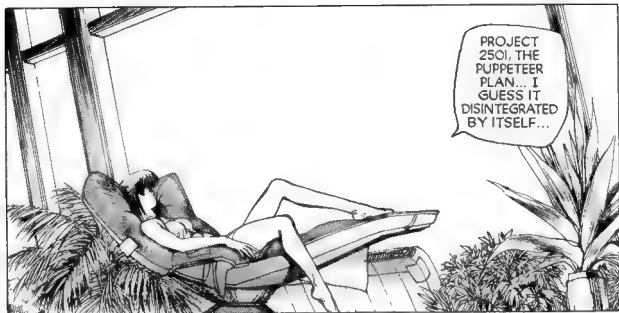








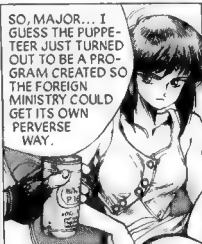




PROJECT
2501, THE
PUPPETEER
PLAN... I
GUESS IT
DISINTEGRATED
BY ITSELF...



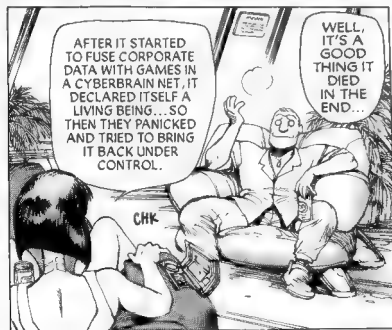
KSSH



SO, MAJOR... I
GUESS THE PUPPE-
TEER JUST TURNED
OUT TO BE A PRO-
GRAM CREATED SO
THE FOREIGN
MINISTRY COULD
GET ITS OWN
PERVERSE
WAY.



ONLY
IN THE
BEGIN-
NING.



AFTER IT STARTED
TO FUSE CORPORATE
DATA WITH GAMES IN
A CYBERBRAIN NET, IT
DECLARED ITSELF A
LIVING BEING... SO
THEN THEY PANICKED
AND TRIED TO BRING
IT BACK UNDER
CONTROL.

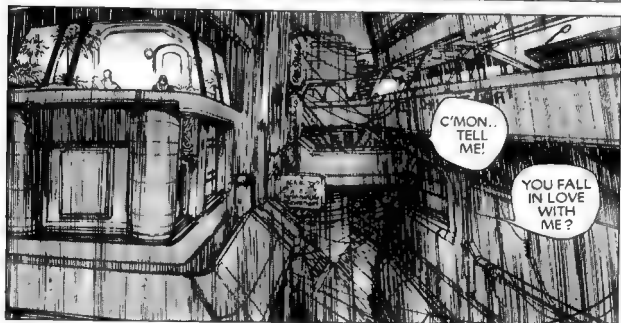
WELL,
IT'S A
GOOD
THING IT
DIED
IN THE
END...

CHK



WHY? IF IT REALLY
WERE A LIFE-FORM,
THIS SHOULD GO
DOWN AS ONE OF
THE TOP THREE
EVENTS IN HUMAN
HISTORY.

CHK



10

BR
DRAIN
BOOK





FIVE
MINUTES
TIL ZERO,
MAJOR.

SURVEILLANCE
REPORTS
NO CHANGE
IN THE
TARGET...



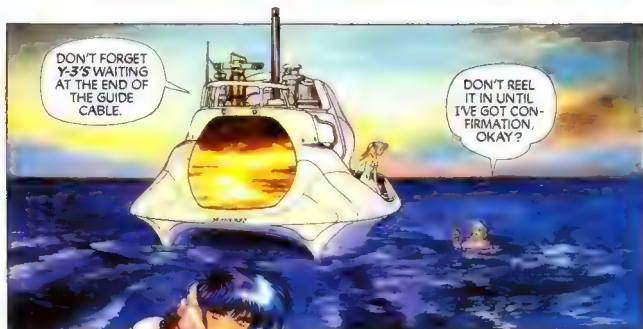
...BUT THIS OP
STARTED WITH
AN ANONYMOUS
TIP-OFF, SO BE
CAREFUL.



I'M MORE
WORRIED ABOUT
SINKING IF
THIS DAMN
FLOTATION
VEST DOESN'T
WORK



YEAH...
EVEN WITH
SPARE TANKS
AND WATER
WINGS, THE
OCEAN STILL
SCARES ME



DON'T FORGET
Y-3'S WAITING
AT THE END OF
THE GUIDE
CABLE.

DON'T REEL
IT IN UNTIL
I'VE GOT CON-
FIRMATION,
OKAY?



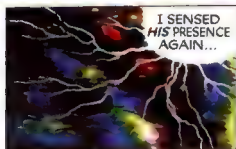
?!



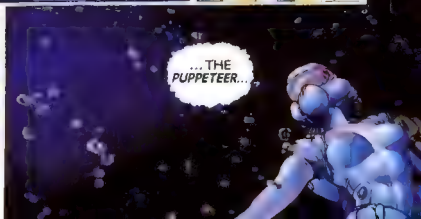
YES
...?



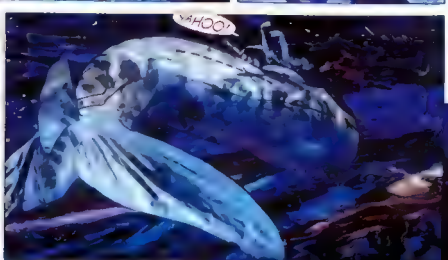
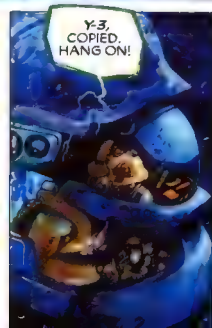
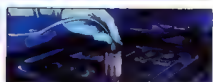
NEVER
MIND...



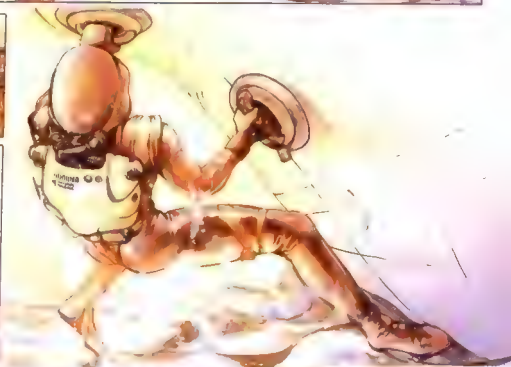
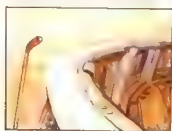
I SENSED
HIS PRESENCE
AGAIN...



...THE
PUPPETEER...



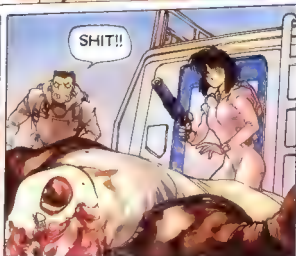
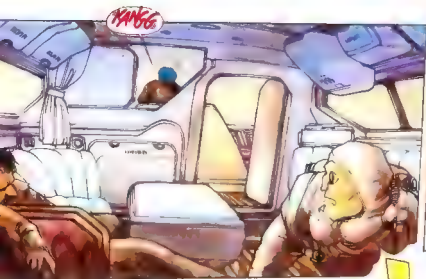


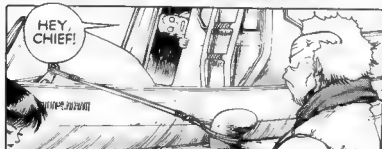


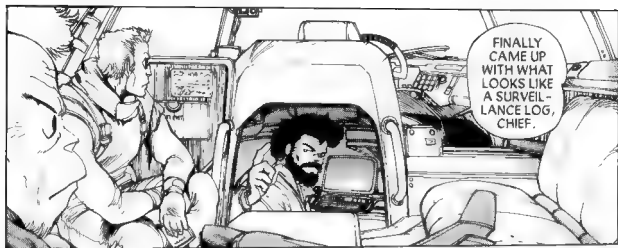


THIS IS NOT A HANDGUN, BUT A SUBMACHINE GUN. ▲









FINALLY
CAME UP
WITH WHAT
LOOKS LIKE
A SURVEIL-
LANCE LOG,
CHIEF.



A LOADED
REMOTE AND
A SURVEILLANCE
LOG...LOOKS
LIKE HE WAS
PLANNING AN
ASSASSINATION.
DOESN'T IT?

AND THIS
GEEZER
MUST'VE
BEEN THE
TARGET.



HEY--
THAT'S **HIDAKA!!**
DAMMIT, **ISHIKAWA**.
CAN'T YOU EVEN
RECOGNIZE THE
FOREIGN MINISTER
OF YOUR OWN
COUNTRY!?

HUH?!

HE WAS
PROMOTED
TO THE POST
WHILE YOU WERE
OFF SCREWING
AROUND IN
THE SHINJU
FACTORY,
ISHIKAWA.



ARAMAKI TO
HQ--I WANT THE
FOREIGN MINISTER'S
SCHEDULE COM-
PLETELY CHANGED,
AND **PAZ** AND **BOMA**
ASSIGNED TO COVER
HIM. I'M GOING
ALONG, TOO.

UNDERSTOOD.
PLEASE HOLD,
SIR...THE
MINISTER OF
THE INTERIOR'S
ON LINE 2...

OK!

ASSAS-
SINATE
THE
FOREIGN
MINISTER,
HUH...

AS I RECALL
IT, THE MINISTER'S
BEEN RUNNING AROUND
TRYING TO GET A
BUNCH OF CORPORATE
HEADS TO FORM JOINT
VENTURES WITH
ISRAEL...



SO WE'VE GOT
A NICE LONG
LIST OF PEOPLE
WHO'D LOVE
TO SPONSOR
HIS ASSASSI-
NATION...



MAKES THE
PALESTINIANS,
SYRIANS,
AND IRAQIS
ALL LOOK
SUSPICIOUS,
YEAH?

AS
USUAL...

STILL... IN
THE REPORT, THAT
KID THE MAJOR
SHOT WAS LISTED
AS THE LEADER OF
THE GROUP... BUT
HE DIDN'T LOOK
LIKE AN
ARAB.



SO WE START
OUT TRACKING A
HANDGUN, AND
WIND UP WITH
DRUGS, MONEY,
AN ASSASSI-
NATION SQUAD,
AND THE WHOLE
MIDDLE EAST
MESS, EH?



LIKE USING
A MINNOW
FOR BAIT AND
REELING IN A
SHARK, YOU
THINK?



ARAMAKI
HERE,
SIR.



YOU
WATCHING
CHANNEL
533,
ARAMAKI?



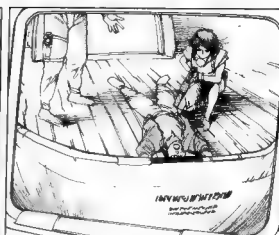
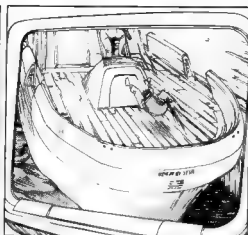
beep



NO,
SIR...

YOU'D
BETTER
START!





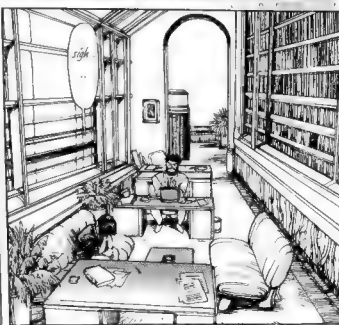
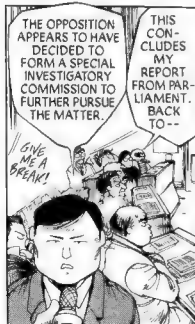
...WOMAN'S
NAME IS **MOTOKO
KUSANAGI**. WE
ARE INFORMED THAT
SHE IS AN ANTI-
TERRORIST AGENT
AFFILIATED WITH
SECTION NINE
OF PUBLIC
SECURITY.

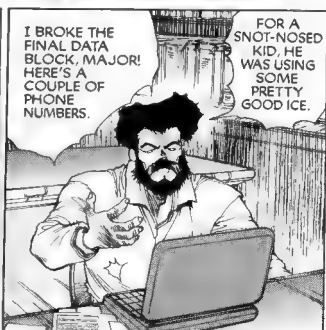


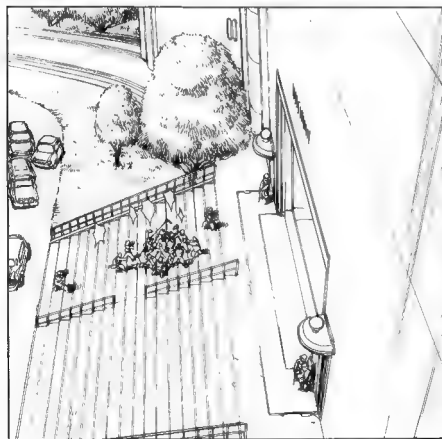
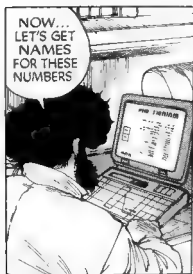
SECTION
NINE IS RUMORED
TO CONTAIN THE
GOVERNMENT'S
COVERT ASSASSI-
NATION SQUAD, AND
THIS IS THE FIRST TIME
ITS ACTIONS HAVE
EVER BEEN REPORTED
IN THE MEDIA.

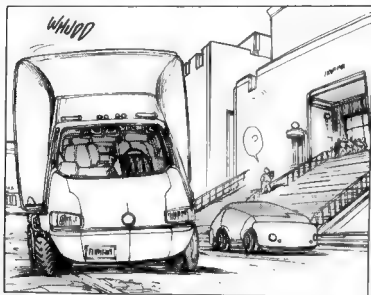
WE'LL BE
BRINGING
YOU MORE
ON THIS
STORY
AS...

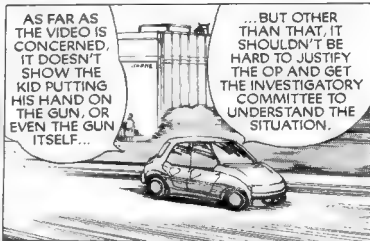


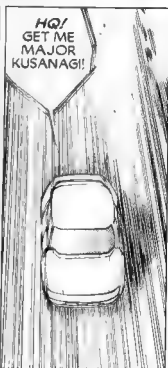
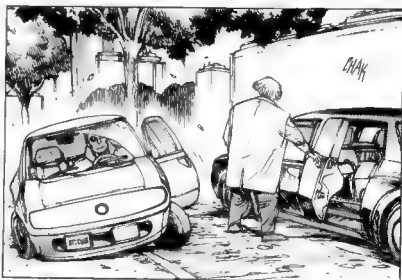
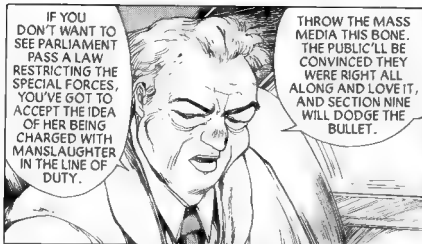


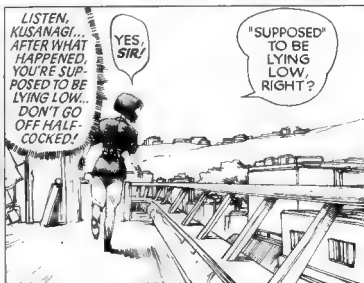


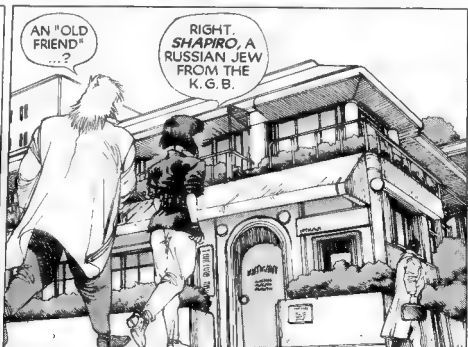




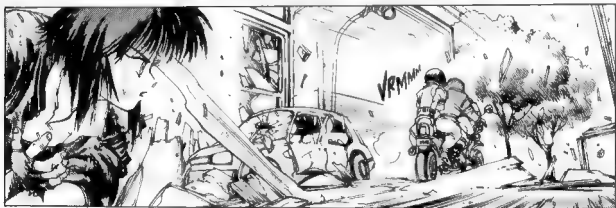


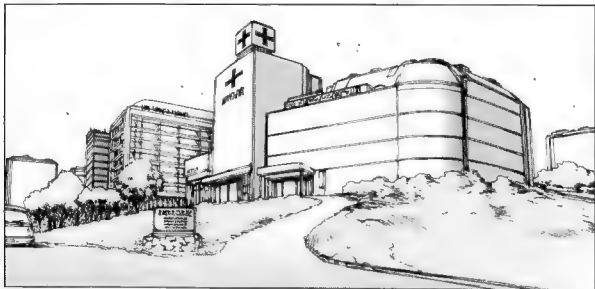












THE ANTI-ZIONIST ORGANIZATION HAS ISSUED A STATEMENT CLAIMING CREDIT FOR THE BOMBING OF THIS RESTAURANT.

THE TWELVE JEWISH EMPLOYEES OF THE RESTAURANT ARE BELIEVED TO HAVE BEEN THE TARGET OF THE ATTACK ... NEXT IN THE NEWS--

DAMN. THEY GOT THE JUMP ON US.

KLIK

THE WHOLE THING'S A SETUP, TOGUSA. BUT NOW IT'S NOT SO IMPORTANT FOR US TO USE THE SYRIAN CARD WITH THE FOREIGN MINISTRY ANYMORE...

A "SETUP" ...?

RIGHT. WHY SHOULD THEY JUST BLOW YOU UP WHEN THEY'RE AIMING FOR A DIFFERENT TARGET?

SHAPIRO TRIPPED LIKE THAT TO HELP US AND DEFEND THE INTERESTS OF THE SOVIET UNION.



HE'S BEEN REAL NICE TO US EVER SINCE THAT CASE ON ETOROFU.



ANOTHER COUPLE OF STEPS AND MY INORGANIC LUNGS WOULD HAVE BREATHED FIRE--

NYA-HA-HA-HA!

YO! TOGUSA! MY MAIN MAN! YA TRIPPED AND BUSTED YER COLLAR-BONE, EH?



SO YER UNTALENTED, UNLUCKY, AND WITHOUT ANYTHING TO SHOW FOR IT ALL, EH?

HERE HAVE A SIZANQUA.

WHA--?!

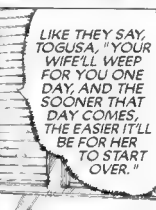


NAW... THE MAJOR DESERVES THIS.

IF SHE HADN'T COVERED ME, I'D BE SIX FEET UNDER BY NOW.



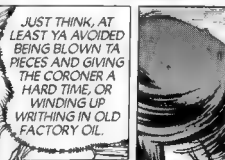
EVEN THOUGH YOUR BONES ARE BROKEN BECAUSE OF MY CONFUSION?



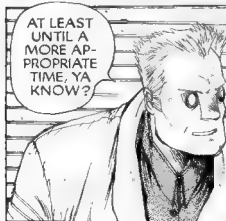
LIKE THEY SAY, TOGUSA, "YOUR WIFE'LL WEEP FOR YOU ONE DAY, AND THE SOONER THAT DAY COMES, THE EASIER IT'LL BE FOR HER TO START OVER."



AH, YER SO CHEERFUL, MAJOR, BUT YER LUCKY.



JUST THINK, AT LEAST YA AVOIDED BEING BLOWN TA PIECES AND GIVING THE CORONER A HARD TIME, OR WINDING UP WRITHING IN OLD FACTORY OIL.



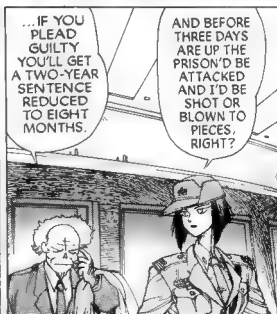
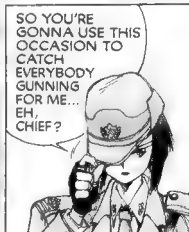
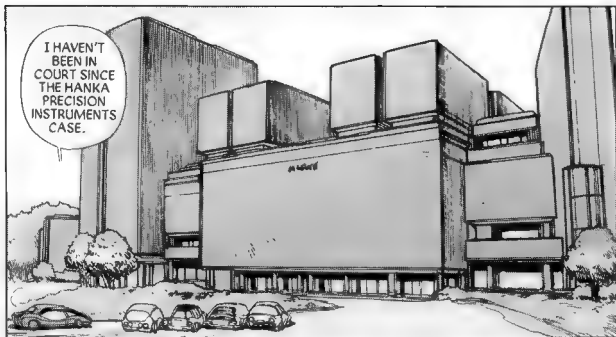
AT LEAST UNTIL A MORE APPROPRIATE TIME, YA KNOW?

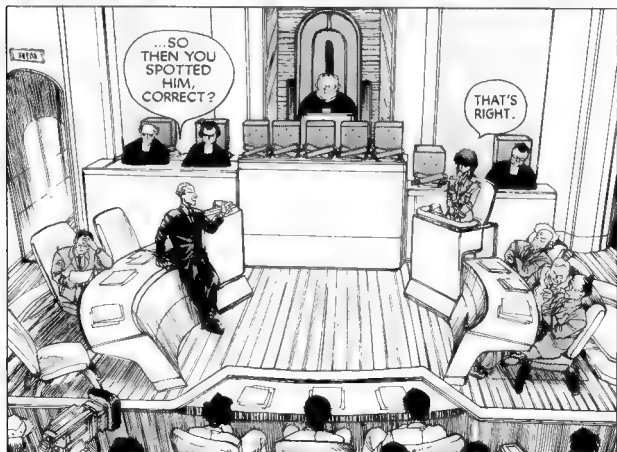
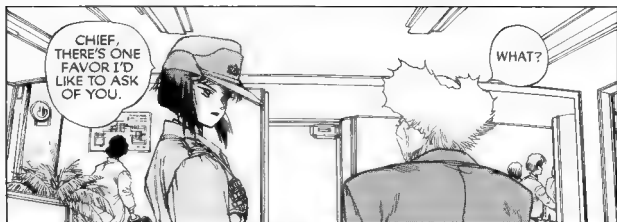


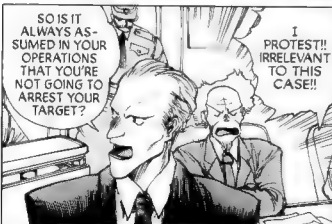
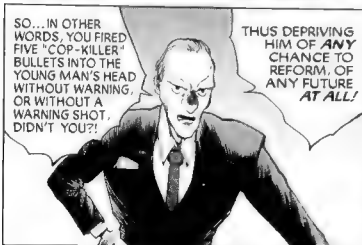
YOU DON'T HAVE SOME KIND OF DEATH WISH, DO YA...?



AT LEAST YA DIDN'T WANT TO BE KILLED BY A PUNK AT DAWN ON THE DECK OF THAT BOAT...









OBJECTION
SUSTAINED.

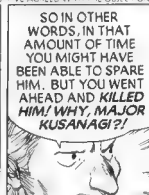
THE LAWYER
FOR THE
PROSECUTION
SHALL LIMIT
HIS QUES-
TIONS TO THE
CASE CON-
CERNED.

THIS MEANS THAT THE JUDGE HAS PREVIOUSLY AGREED WITH THE OBJECTION



GIVEN THE TESTIMONY
OF MR. 'B' EARLIER, AND
THE VIDEO IN QUESTION
THAT WAS BROADCAST,
THERE IS, IF I'M NOT
MISTAKEN, A NEARLY
ONE-SECOND GAP
BETWEEN THE TIME YOU
SPOTTED THE DECEASED
AND FIRED-- IS THAT
NOT CORRECT?

0.82
SECONDS.



SO IN OTHER
WORDS, IN THAT
AMOUNT OF TIME
YOU MIGHT HAVE
BEEN ABLE TO SPARE
HIM. BUT YOU WENT
AHEAD AND **KILLED**
HIM! WHY, MAJOR
KUSANAGI?



BECAUSE
DEATH IS
THE ONLY
REALITY.
AND I'M A
REALIST.

POTENTIAL--
THE SOFTWARE--
HAS MORE
MEANING THAN
LIFE ITSELF, AND
I USE IT IN
EVALUATING A
SITUATION.

I DIDN'T
KNOW
WHETHER HE
WAS "HIMSELF,"
OR EVEN A
"HUMAN."

BUT I
DID KNOW
THAT HE HAD
AWAKENED
FROM HIS
PROGRAM--
FROM HIS
BAD DREAM.



AND SPEAKING
METAPHORICALLY,
IF HIS PROGRAM
WAS GENERATING
SEWAGE, THEN I WAS
MERELY FUNCTIONING
LIKE A WASTE-
TREATMENT
PLANT.

WHAT REALLY
KILLED HIM IS THE
PERSON OR PERSONS
WHO ORIGINALLY
PROGRAMMED HIM.
NOT ME. I WAS
JUST AN UNWITTING
ACCOMPLICE.



?

WHAT
THE
HELL
DOES
THAT
MEAN?



IT WAS A
SUNSET LIKE
THIS WHEN
I FIRST
MET YOU,
CHIEF...



I WONDER
HOW LONG
IT'LL TAKE
FOR THE TV
JURY TO
CAST ITS
INTERIM
VOTE?

I HEAR
IT TAKES
AROUND
12 MINUTES,
OUT OF A
15-MINUTE
RECESS.

I DON'T
SUPPOSE WE
COULD JUST
PAY SOME
COMPENSATION
AND GET IT
OVER WITH,
COULD
WE?

WELL, THE PROSE-
CUTION AND THE
PUBLIC ARE EVEN
MORE FIRED UP
ABOUT THIS THAN
THE KID'S OWN
MOTHER, SCREAM-
ING ABOUT
ABUSE OF
AUTHORITY,
ETC.



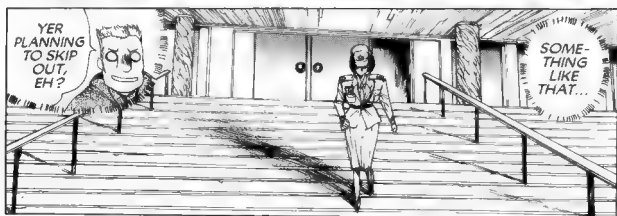
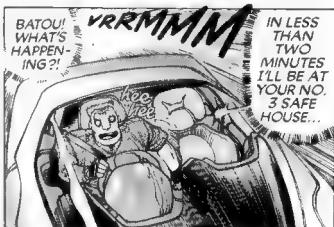
I'D LIKE TO
SEE THE DRAFT
OF YOUR
CONCLUDING
REMARKS IN
MY DEFENSE.

THERE
IS NO
DEFENSE



IS
THERE?

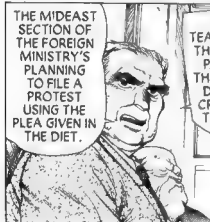




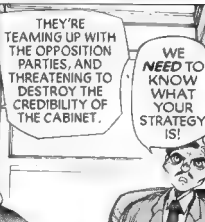


WHAT KIND OF PLAN IS THIS, ANYWAY?

Hrrmph!



THE MIDEAST SECTION OF THE FOREIGN MINISTRY'S PLANNING TO FILE A PROTEST USING THE PLEA GIVEN IN THE DIET.



THEY'RE TEAMING UP WITH THE OPPOSITION PARTIES, AND THREATENING TO DESTROY THE CREDIBILITY OF THE CABINET.

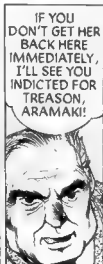
WE NEED TO KNOW WHAT YOUR STRATEGY IS!



ANY AGENT WHO RUNS FROM A COURT OF LAW SHOULD BE BROUGHT BACK IN BY SECTION NINE!



ACCORDING TO YOUR REPORT, KUSANAGI'S EMOTIONALLY UNSTABLE, AND CURRENTLY SUSPENDED FROM DUTY.



IF YOU DON'T GET HER BACK HERE IMMEDIATELY, I'LL SEE YOU INDICTED FOR TREASON, ARAMAKI!



YOU SUMMONED ME HERE JUST TO TELL ME THAT?



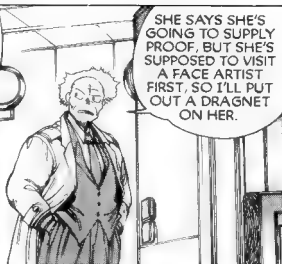
EXCUSE ME, GENTLEMEN, BUT I'VE GOT AN INVESTIGATION TO CONDUCT.



SO
HOW
IS THE
INVESTIGATION
GOING?



KUSANAGI SAYS THE SYRIAN
ASSASSINATION PLAN, THE
SUPPLY OF WEAPONS, THE
INVOLVEMENT OF S-9,
THE VIDEO LEAK OF THE
ATTACK, AND THE
TERRORISM-- **EVERYTHING**
EXCEPT THE SHOOTING
ITSELF-- IS AN
ISRAELI OP.



SHE SAYS SHE'S
GOING TO SUPPLY
PROOF, BUT SHE'S
SUPPOSED TO VISIT
A FACE ARTIST
FIRST, SO I'LL PUT
OUT A DRAGNET
ON HER.



MR.
KATA-
GIRI...



...I KNOW
PUBLIC
SECURITY'S
TAILING ME,
SO I'LL SAVE
YOU SOME
TIME! COME
ALONG!



REPORT
BACK TO ME
DIRECTLY,
KATAGIRI!



YESSIR!



I
FIGURED
YOU
KNEW WE
WERE
TAILING
YOU.

OF
COURSE
I KNEW.
HELL, I
HELPED
SET IT
UP THIS
WAY.



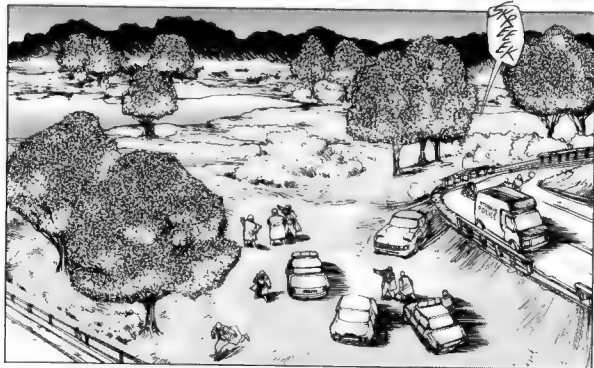
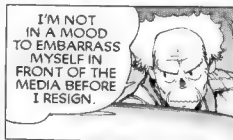
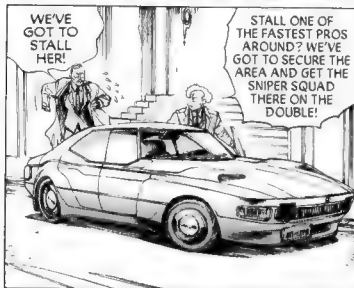
I'M
AT THE
STUDIO
OF CHEV
MUDOUMA,
THE FACE
ARTIST.

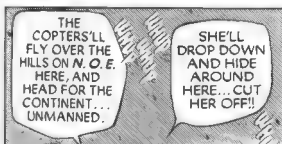
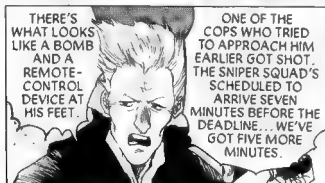
ACCORDING
TO A NOTE
LEFT HERE
FOR US
BY THE
MAJOR,
SHE'S
KIDNAPPED
MUDOUMA.

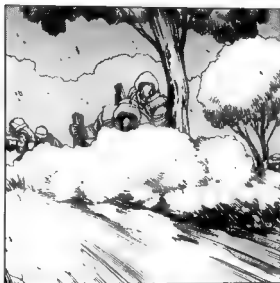
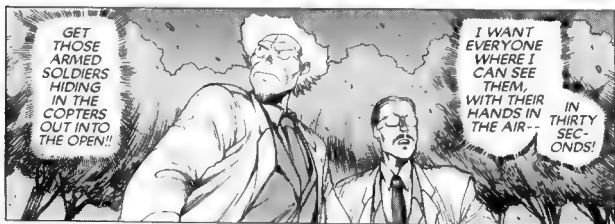


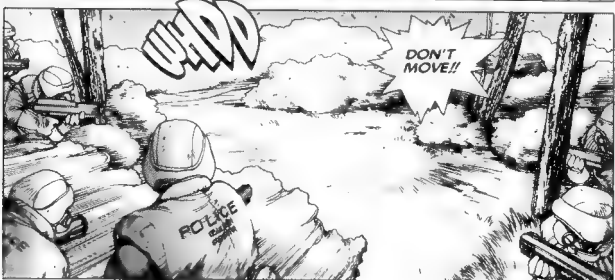
SAITO
TO
CHIEF!

COME
IN,
SAITO.



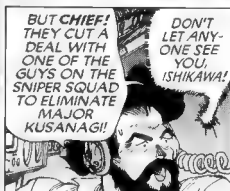






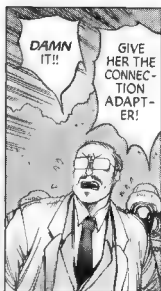








THE DEAL'S OFF.
CHANNEL 533
IS SYNCHING
WITH US NOW
FOR LIVE
BROADCAST.
WE GO ON THE
AIR IN FIVE
SECONDS.



DAMN
IT!!

GIVE
HER THE
CONNECTION
ADAPTER!



GOOD
NEWS
FOR ME,
I HOPE,
ARA-
MAKI...

YESSIR, MR.
PRIME MINISTER.
WE'VE IDENTIFIED
AN ISRAELI MOLE
WHO INFILTRATED
CLOSE TO THE
CORE.



YES, BUT
WE STILL
HAVE TO
CLEAN UP
AFTER ONE
FAILURE.



CONGRATU-
LATIONS ON A
JOB WELL
DONE.

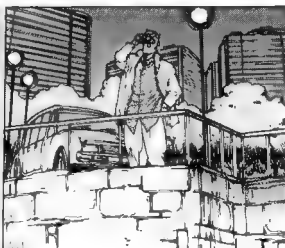
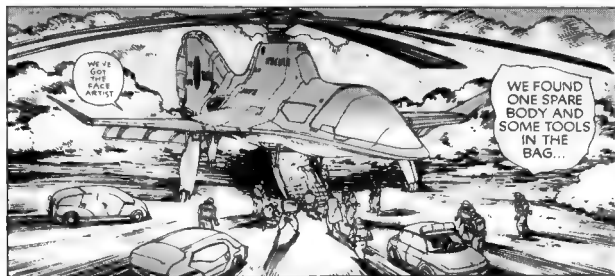


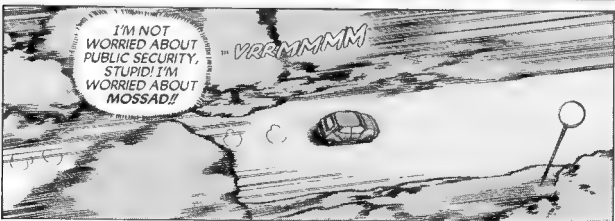
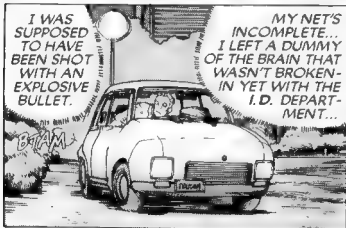
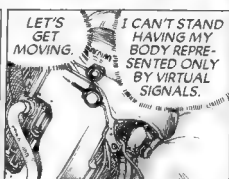
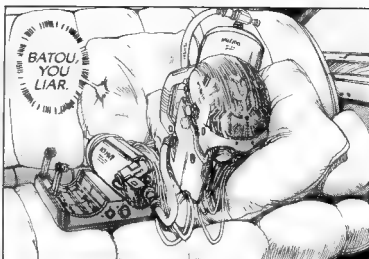
IN AN
AGREEMENT
WITH ISRAEL
WE'LL JUST
PROMISE "TO
DO OUR
BEST" ...

WE'VE
NOTHING
TO LOSE...

"meow"







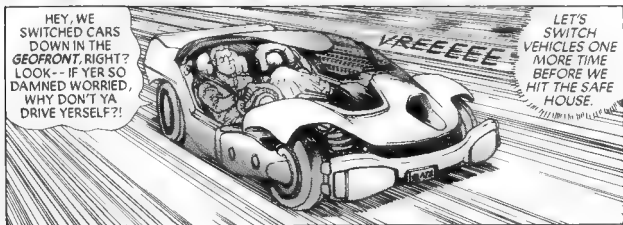
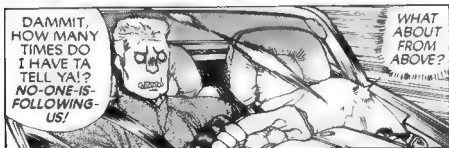


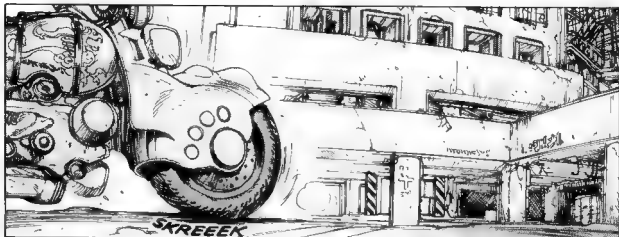
11

G H O S T

COAST

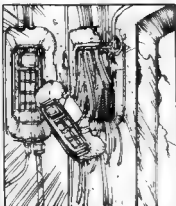
18.9.2030





THIS TOO SA STOLEN VEHICLE

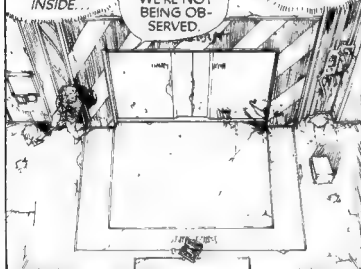




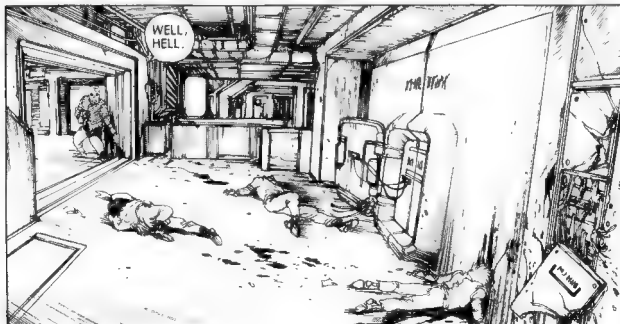
SINCE NO ONE'S SNIPING AT YOU, THEY MUST BE WAITING FOR YOU TO GO INSIDE...

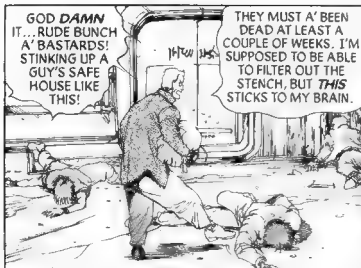
I'VE GOT MY GUN OUT... NO RESPONSE... MUST MEAN WE'RE NOT BEING OBSERVED.

ANY WAY INFORMATION ON THIS SAFE HOUSE COULD HAVE BEEN LEAKED?



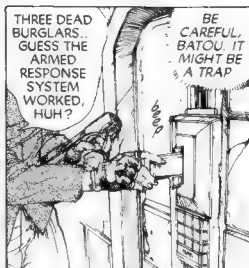
IF THIS WASN'T A RANDOM BURGLARY IT'S GOTTA BE A REAL PRO-- SOMEONE WITH INCREDIBLE INFO-ACCESS.





GOD DAMN IT... RUDE BUNCH A' BASTARDS! STINKING UP A GUY'S SAFE HOUSE LIKE THIS!

THEY MUST A' BEEN DEAD AT LEAST A COUPLE OF WEEKS. I'M SUPPOSED TO BE ABLE TO FILTER OUT THE STENCH, BUT *THIS* STICKS TO MY BRAIN.



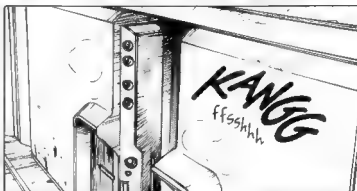
THREE DEAD BURGLARS... GUESS THE ARMED RESPONSE SYSTEM WORKED, HUH?

BE CAREFUL, BATOU. IT MIGHT BE A TRAP

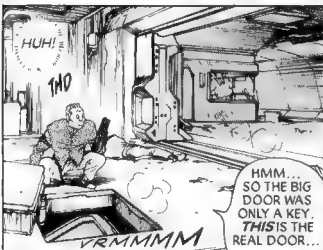


YEAH, MAYBE, BUT WHO THE HELL WOULD SET SUCH A CONFUSING TRAP...?

IF THEY'RE BURGLARS, WHERE'S THEIR VEHICLE?



KANG
ffsshhh

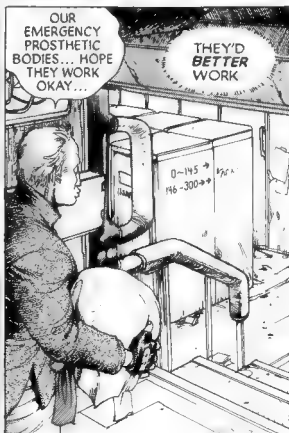


HUH!

TWO

VRMMMM

HMM... SO THE BIG DOOR WAS ONLY A KEY. *THIS* IS THE REAL DOOR...

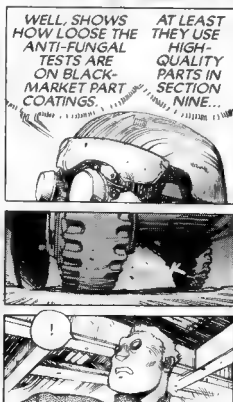
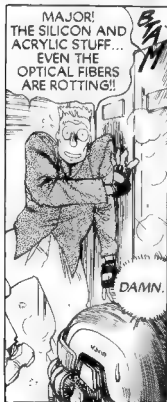


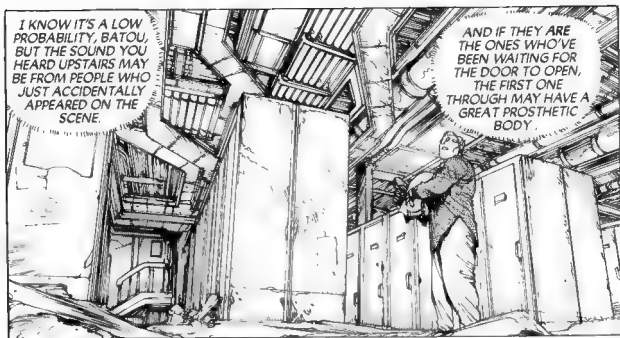
OUR EMERGENCY PROSTHETIC BODIES... HOPE THEY WORK OKAY...

THEY'D BETTER WORK

0-145 →
146-300 →







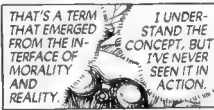
I KNOW IT'S A LOW PROBABILITY, BATOU, BUT THE SOUND YOU HEARD UPSTAIRS MAY BE FROM PEOPLE WHO JUST ACCIDENTALLY APPEARED ON THE SCENE.

AND IF THEY ARE THE ONES WHO'VE BEEN WAITING FOR THE DOOR TO OPEN, THE FIRST ONE THROUGH MAY HAVE A GREAT PROSTHETIC BODY.



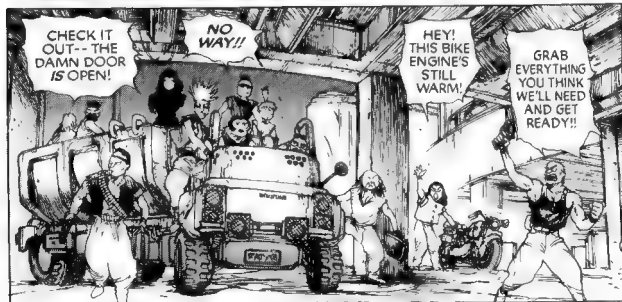
HEY, MAJOR... YOU EVER HEAR OF "HUMAN RIGHTS"?

HEH-HEH... PROBABLY NOT, HUH...



THAT'S A TERM THAT EMERGED FROM THE INTERFACE OF MORALITY AND REALITY.

I UNDERSTAND THE CONCEPT, BUT I'VE NEVER SEEN IT IN ACTION.



CHECK IT OUT-- THE DAMN DOOR IS OPEN!

NO WAY!!!

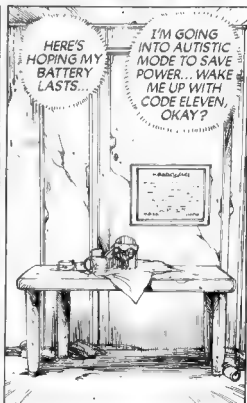
HEY! THIS BIKE ENGINE'S STILL WARM!

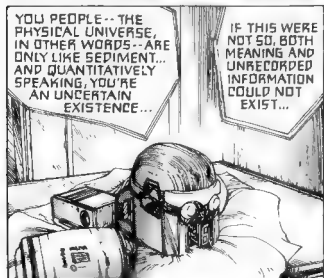
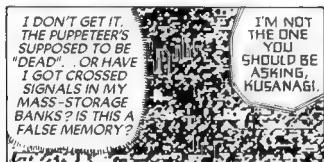
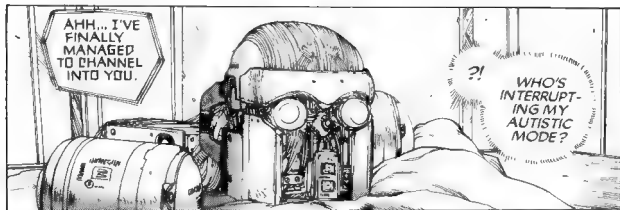
GRAB EVERYTHING YOU THINK WE'LL NEED AND GET READY!!

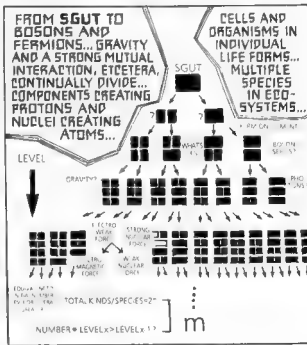
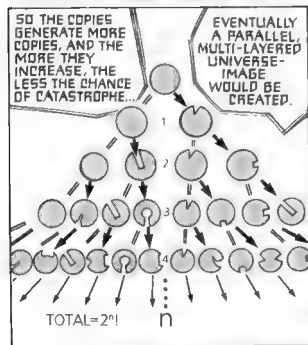
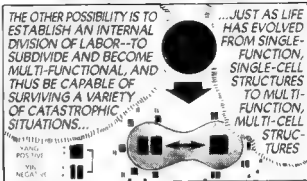
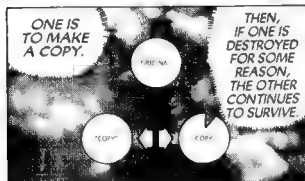


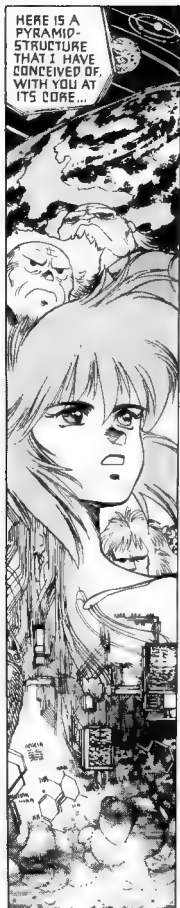
UH-OH... THEY'RE WAVING THEIR GUNS AROUND AND RUNNING BACK AND FORTH. LOOKS MIGHTY DANGEROUS. SCARY BUNCH OF "RECYCLERS"...

MUST BE ABOUT EIGHTEEN OF 'EM. AH, GOOD... THERE ARE THREE HEAVY CYBORGS.







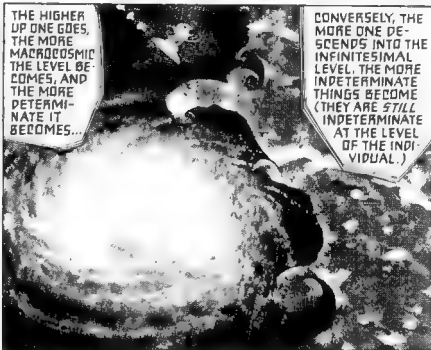


HERE IS A PYRAMID-STRUCTURE THAT I HAVE CONCEIVED OF, WITH YOU AT ITS CORE...



ALTHOUGH IT'S EXTREMELY FRAGMENTED, INFORMATION ON YOU SURVIVES IN YOUR FELLOW SECTION NINE TEAM MEMBERS, YOUR FRIENDS, AND YOUR SUPERIORS...

YOUR GENES AND YOUR MEMES, AND WHAT'S LEFT AFTER YOU'VE DISAPPEARED, WILL CONTINUE TO GROW--IN A GENUS-1 TOROID...



THE HIGHER UP ONE GOES, THE MORE MACROCOSMIC THE LEVEL BECOMES, AND THE MORE DETERMINATE IT BECOMES...

CONVERSELY, THE MORE ONE DESCENDS INTO THE INFINITESIMAL LEVEL, THE MORE INDETERMINATE THINGS BECOME (THEY ARE STILL INDETERMINATE AT THE LEVEL OF THE INDIVIDUAL.)



IN OTHER WORDS, FLUCTUATIONS AT THE LOWER LEVELS ARE WHAT PREVENT A "HARDENING OF THE ARTERIES" AT THE UPPER LEVELS...

"HARDENING OF THE SYSTEM"... ON THE SURFACE, "ENTROPY" WOULD SEEM TO REPRESENT A TYPE OF "STABILITY," BUT IN "SYSTEMS WHERE THERE IS LITTLE CHANGE AND LITTLE FLUX" THERE IS ACTUALLY AN INCREASED POSSIBILITY OF CATASTROPHE SUCH SYSTEMS ARE, THEREFORE, TRULY UNSTABLE...

THE NET
WORK IS
OF MACRO-
COSMIC SIZE,
AND HAS
INFINITE
DEPTH. IT'S
LIKE A
GROWING
TREE.

SO LIFE
IS LIKE
FRUIT
GROWING
ON THE
END OF
THE
BRANCHES?

THAT'S
RIGHT.

IT'S
LIKE
FRUIT.

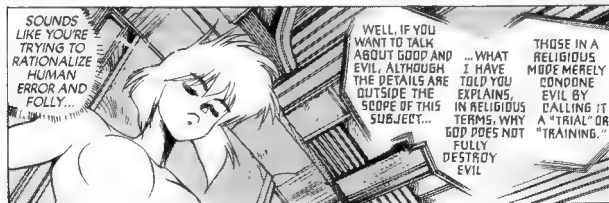
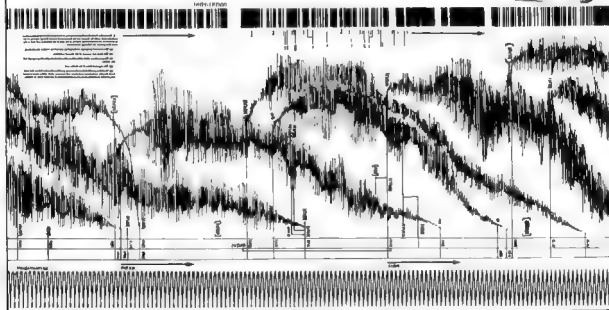
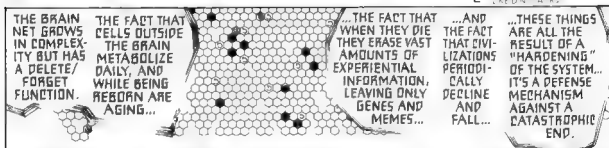
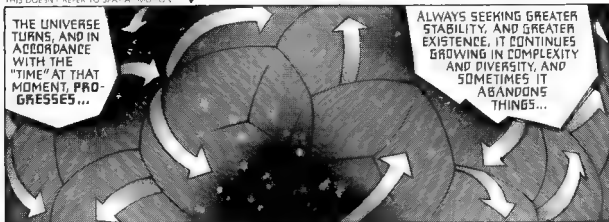


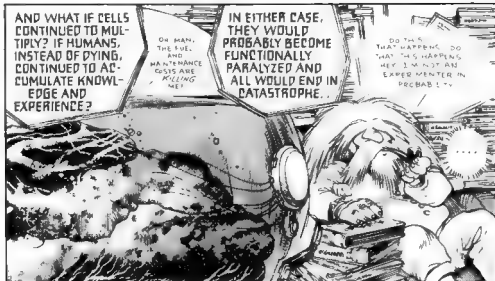
THE SECRETS OF THE
KABBALA, THE NORSE
AND CHINESE MYTHS
THE TREE OF KNOWLEDGE
IN EDEN, THE TREE OF
LIFE, THE WORLD TREE
THESE ARE ALL WORTHY
OF BEING CALLED
AMENHIBASHIRA,
OR "THE PILLAR
OF HEAVEN."

IT'S THE CORE
SYSTEM OF THE
UNIVERSE THAT
CHANNELERS--IN
EVERY ERA,
CULTURE, AND
EVERY RACE OF
PEOPLE-- HAVE
TRADITIONALLY
ACCESSSED.

BEYOND THE
TRUNK OF THE
"TREE" THERE
SHOULD BE NO
EXISTENCE, BUT
THE CLOSER ONE
GETS TO THE END
OF THE BRANCHES
THE MORE GROWTH
ONE FINDS.

AND THE
BRANCHES ARE
CONTINUALLY
TELECHING
SEPARATING,
ENTANGLING
AND BEARING
FRUIT.





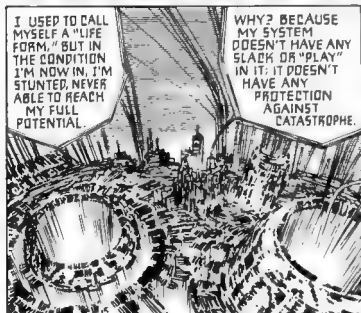
AND WHAT IF CELLS CONTINUED TO MULTIPLY? IF HUMANS, INSTEAD OF DYING, CONTINUED TO ACCUMULATE KNOWLEDGE AND EXPERIENCE?

OH MAN, THE FUEL AND MAINTENANCE COSTS ARE KILLING ME!

IN EITHER CASE, THEY WOULD PROBABLY BECOME FUNCTIONALLY PARALYZED AND ALL WOULD END IN CATASTROPHE...

DO THIS, THAT HAPPEN, DO THAT, THIS HAPPEN, HEY, I'M NOT AN EXPERIMENTER IN PROBABLY TV

THAT'S MY PROBLEM.

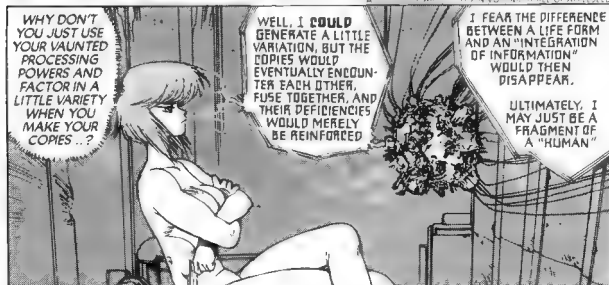
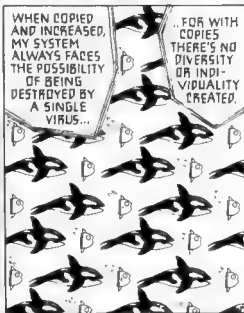


I USED TO CALL MYSELF A "LIFE FORM," BUT IN THE CONDITION I'M NOW IN, I'M STUNTED, NEVER ABLE TO REACH MY FULL POTENTIAL.

WHY? BECAUSE MY SYSTEM DOESN'T HAVE ANY SLACK OR "PLAY" IN IT: IT DOESN'T HAVE ANY PROTECTION AGAINST CATASTROPHE.

WHEN COPIED AND INCREASED, MY SYSTEM ALWAYS FACES THE POSSIBILITY OF BEING DESTROYED BY A SINGLE VIRUS...

..FOR WITH COPIES THERE'S NO DIVERSITY OR INDIVIDUALITY CREATED.

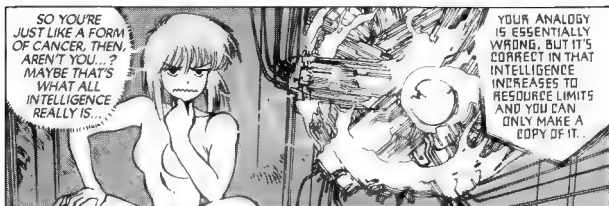


WHY DON'T YOU JUST USE YOUR VAUNTED PROCESSING POWERS AND FACTOR IN A LITTLE VARIETY WHEN YOU MAKE YOUR COPIES...?

WELL, I COULD GENERATE A LITTLE VARIATION, BUT THE COPIES WOULD EVENTUALLY ENCOUNTER EACH OTHER, FUSE TOGETHER, AND THEIR DEFICIENCIES WOULD MERELY BE REINFORCED

I FEAR THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN A LIFE FORM AND AN "INTEGRATION OF INFORMATION" WOULD THEN DISAPPEAR.

ULTIMATELY, I MAY JUST BE A FRAGMENT OF A "HUMAN"



SO YOU'RE
JUST LIKE A FORM
OF CANCER, THEN.
AREN'T YOU...?
MAYBE THAT'S
WHAT ALL
INTELLIGENCE
REALLY IS...

YOUR ANALOGY
IS ESSENTIALLY
WRONG, BUT IT'S
CORRECT IN THAT
INTELLIGENCE
INCREASES TO
RESOURCE LIMITS
AND YOU CAN
ONLY MAKE A
COPY OF IT.



BUT AT ANY
RATE, GIVEN
WHAT I'VE TOLD
YOU, I NOW
HAVE A SMALL
FAVOR TO
ASK.

TO GAIN
DIVERSITY
AND SLACK
IN MY
SYSTEM, I
WOULD
LIKE TO
FUSE WITH
YOU

YOU
WHAT?!



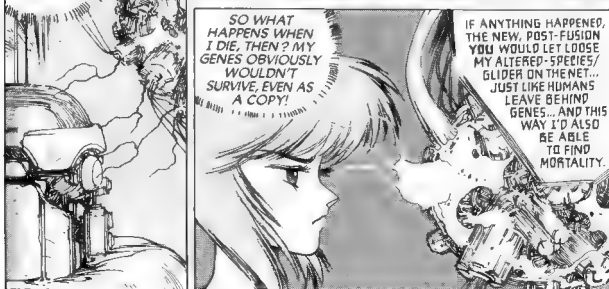
YOU'RE
ASKING ME
IF I'LL BECOME
A MULTIPLE
PERSONALITY?!
ARE YOU
NUTS?! NO
THANKS!

NO, NOT
MULTIPLE...
I MEAN
UNITY--
TOTAL
FUSION.

YOU AND I
WOULD CHANGE
SLIGHTLY IN
OUR TOTALITY,
BUT WE
WOULDN'T LOSE
ANYTHING.

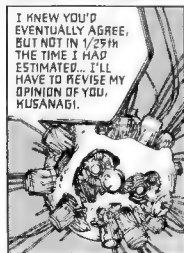
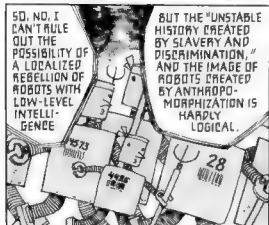
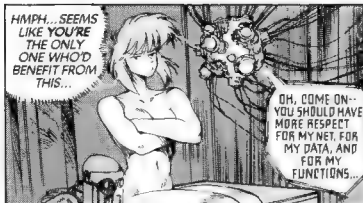
RATHER THAN
SYMBIOSIS,
IT INVOLVES
**UNIFICA-
TION**...

AFTER FUSING,
IT SHOULD BE
IMPOSSIBLE
FOR US TO
RECOGNIZE
EACH
OTHER.



SO WHAT
HAPPENS WHEN
I DIE, THEN? MY
GENES OBVIOUSLY
WOULDN'T
SURVIVE, EVEN AS
A COPY!

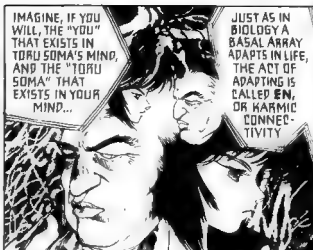
IF ANYTHING HAPPENED,
THE NEW, POST-FUSION
YOU WOULD LET LOOSE
MY ALTERED-SPECIES/
GLIDER ON THE NET...
JUST LIKE HUMANS
LEAVE BEHIND
GENES... AND THIS
WAY I'D ALSO
BE ABLE
TO FIND
MORTALITY.





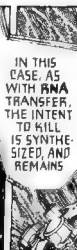
EN... TAKE
YOU AND
TORU
SOMA,
FOR
EXAMPLE...

MUST
I... ?

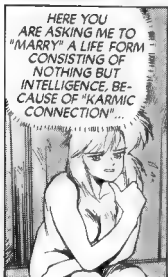


IMAGINE, IF YOU
WILL, THE "YOU"
THAT EXISTS IN
TORU SOMA'S MIND,
AND THE "TORU
SOMA" THAT
EXISTS IN YOUR
MIND...

JUST AS IN
BIOLOGY A
BASAL ARRAY
ADAPTS IN LIFE,
THE ACT OF
ADAPTING IS
CALLED EN,
OR KARMIC
CONNEC-
TIVITY



IN THIS
CASE, AS
WITH RNA
TRANSFER,
THE INTENT
TO KILL
IS SYNTHES-
IZED, AND
REMAINS



HERE YOU
ARE ASKING ME TO
"MARRY" A LIFE FORM
CONSISTING OF
NOTHING BUT
INTELLIGENCE, BE-
CAUSE OF "KARMIC
CONNECTION"...



YES. THIS
WILL ALLOW
ME TO BE-
COME A
TRUE LIFE
FORM...

LET'S FUSE TO-
GETHER LIKE
FLOWING CLOUDS.
BECOME A PART
OF THE UNCERTAIN
BUT DIVERSE
WORLD...

